

THIS TEXT IS IN ENGLISH.

THIS KIND OF BROKEN ENGLISH IS THE NEW SLANG FOR ALL STUDENTS,  
ARTISTS, HISTORIANS, ACADEMIANS, MERCHANTS, WORKERS AROUND THE  
WORLD AND PROBABLY AROUND EUROPE.



FICTION THROUGH REALITY

# ANIMAL

# *of the* *STATE*

SURVIVAL KIT  
EDUCATIONAL AND ARTISTIC RESEARCH PROGRAMME

A COOPERATION BETWEEN  
THE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS MUNICH AND  
THE ATHENS SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

DAAD PROGRAMME:  
PARTNERSHIPS WITH GREEK INSTITUTIONS  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION 2014–2016



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**TALK**

\_\_\_\_\_



AROUND

has bread

#Urdu #Greek #English #translation #Interview

# Palimpsest

# TO BET

RTF Conference

# HOW



**Go  
thru**

## VILLAINS

**CATASTROPHY AS FOR**  
**SURVIVING YOURSELVES**



# A BIG BLACK TABLE

## EASY TO STRETCH

## S - KIT EPISODE III

### Double Aramaic Alpine Dream

Nice Style, 2016  
Powder-coated aluminium  
This fluorescent railing cuts through the space,  
requiring us to negotiate our way around it.  
A deliberately intense colour, it is as if a drawn  
gesture disrupts the gallery.\*

2

*GIVE ME*

CIRCUITS ON AIR  
RADIO SHOW #00

SCORE

**DO YOU KNOW  
ENTECHNO SONGS ?  
WHEN IT SOUNDS NICE,  
BUT YOU DON'T GET  
THE SENSE**

**A PERCEPTION OF  
SPACE-TIME  
AND DESCRIPTION IN  
FICTIONAL LANGUAGE  
AN AT RISE DESCRIPTION**

# DÉJÀ VIE

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*ANIMAL*

*of the*  
*STATE*











## **S - KIT EPISODE I** **The Delphi Prequel**

— BY CIVIEL MOMO

The Bauhaus building couldn't hold us in its interior anymore. And the interior was filled with artistic gratitude that can cause severe damage or disgust to people that are feeling art-sick. Many questioned themselves: how fascinated can you be or appear to be in a group, talking about its own politics?

The plan was to get all of us in a situation, where everyone would be questioning its structure. This plan's origins were yet unknown to the participants, as were their own capacities for foreseeing this programme's future and also their own. Being the Oracle of the Infrastructure. The infrastructure of this plan seemed to be infinite to some, and orientated for others. Some felt like experiments, while others were focusing on experimental practice. It was the beginning of autumn.

The plan was going on, with no one fully understanding its circular form and intentions.

The words, the artworks and the tensions—so confusion started emitting in the living room of the modernistic building in Delphi. Imagine being put in a position where you become a survivor against your own will. But let's face-phase it, this is how it works!



The first hours were based on conversations: why where the two groups coming together, why did the circular-formed performance take place at the ancient ruins of the archaeological site and why was it video recorded? Questions of privacy, a sense of mistrust and political evaluation of activities and behaviours arose.

The plan was to go for a night walk on the mountain nearby the Bauhaus-like building.

**We all started walking,  
late into the night,  
wearing costumes, uniforms,  
some of us resembled unicorns,  
we passed by a marble fountain.**

**We entered gently in the night.**

**Some of us brought flashlights  
and some brought torches with them,  
yet some of us didn't,  
so the voices of those  
who foresaw the future  
and the ones who didn't  
created a striking,  
contradictory sound  
in the middle of the peculiar  
and redolent night.**



Laughter, mixed with earthly smells and sounds of night birds and thirsty dogs. So many of us, so many of them, yet we were not so many all together. The weather, the sounds and the distance, our search, the walk of a path no longer in existence, and rocks were falling every now and then.

'I've hurt my leg', and rocks were still falling, but the dim light coming from the flashlights and the torches kept us excited.

Finally we reached a perfectly moonlit spot full of various trees and bushes. Many of us were gasping, some were coughing, some were blasting, blasting the silence of this spot. The trees were many but I was feeling hollow, lyrically I laid down in a hollow tree. The hollow tree was the exact opposite thing to a TV., I could exclude myself from the silently disturbed spot, I heard someone playing with golden coins in a pot.

**He gave to each one of us  
one golden coin and said:  
'Use it wisely!'**

**I ate it immediately.  
And some of the others ate them too.  
Now I am worth more  
with a golden coin in me,  
but I was still  
hollow  
and so I left the hollow tree...**

I saw things that triggered my helplessness and people that commented on my then twisted perception of loving and ways of embracing the beauty that lies within it. So I decided to lay down on the moist ground and look directly at the full moon. I felt like I was floating on a moon-sea with no one holding me back, caring or even noticing.

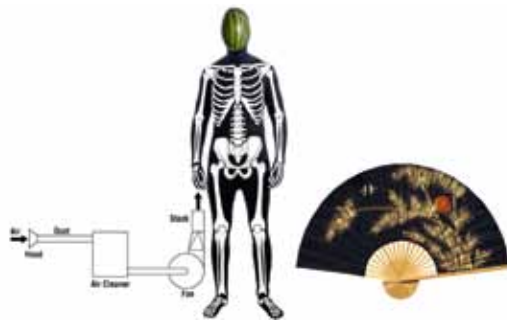
I have felt that my penumbra was cast in the depth of the moon-sea ground, but I was interrupted and I imagined my half shadow self-deconstructing into particles and plankton.



Footsteps, foot... steps... coming closer...  
 someone is here...  
 Someone appeared in front of my eyes  
 and sat next to me,  
 and like a stabiliser and an icebreaker  
 casted away all of the gravy waves.  
 We walked together towards the spot  
 where Google-Oracle now joined the crowd.

A digitised mistress siting next to a neon fire, receiving questions, conjunction phrases and affections. The answers were of course oracular and bipolar, like a grizzly bear/polar bear hybrid. Blankets, people and the night were becoming one, and side by side they said goodnight, and started walking down the mountain.

This time we drank water from the marble fountain. We reached the Bauhaus Annex and the sun was rising. A circulating infrastructure and more meetings were yet to come.



Got my skeleton uniform off and came undone.  
 The roof was leaking, someone played the  
 tambourine and the drum.  
 That night I dreamed of a ventilation  
 system and a fan.

P.S. 1: THERE IS NOTHING ABOUT THIS TEXT PIECE THAT I ENJOY BUT I WILL TRY TO REDO IT WHEN DEADLINES WILL NO LONGER EXIST, WHEN THE KIT WILL NOT BE ANY LONGER FOR SURVIVAL, WHEN I DECIDE TO TAKE DECISIONS MORE EASILY AND WITH NO DENIAL.

P.S. 2: THERE IS NOTHING ABOUT DECISIONS THAT COULD BE EXTRA FASCINATING. STILL THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT DECISIONS TAKEN BY OTHERS. THIS COULD BE A PUBLISHING STUNT. THIS COULD BE A QUEST OF UN-LOVE. THIS COULD BE A PUBLICATION TEXT GONE WRONG. THIS COULD BE YOU AND ME MUMBLING ON THE PHONE.

P.S. 3: THIS STORY COULD BE REFERRING TO FUTURE TIME PORTALS OR NOT. THIS STORY COULD BE REFERRING TO THE FUTURE OF THE S-KIT PROGRAMME OR NOT. THIS STORY IS WRITTEN BY A DISCONTENTED AUTHOR. THIS STORY IS NOT A STORY ANYMORE. THIS STORY IS AN INTERVENTION.







## **Entering the space...**

The main sliding door leads to a narrow corridor, about a metre wide. To the right, two doors lead into two small rooms. The first room is about 20 square metres and the second is about 15 square metres. To the right of the corridor one more door leads to a third room also approximately 15 square metres. To the left, the corridor turns to the right. A fourth door leads to a fourth room also about 15 square metres in size. Opposite the fourth door, a staircase leads to an upper floor. To the left of the staircase a fifth door gives access to a fifth room, today known as the 'current room'. The rooms of the ground floor are separated by wooden walls, painted white. The doors of the first four rooms are grey. The floor of the first four rooms is also grey. Each room is in a different shade of grey. The floor of the corridor and the fifth room are not painted. One can see the old mosaic floor. The fifth door is an old-fashioned creamy colour. At the main corridor, the first room

and the fifth, now the so-called 'current room', have big windows looking out onto the street. The windows are painted white. No one can see out or in through these windows. The windows, as well as the main door on the outer side are protected by security bars. In the 'current room' there is a second entrance to the space. Big windows with security bars and a sliding door with sliding bars on the outer side face onto the street. The main electricity switchboard is in that room. One has to go through this room every time one enters or exits the space. When exiting the so-called 'current room' one will find the staircase and another two doors to the left, the toilets. To the right a kitchenette. In the kitchenette are two old marble sinks, a marble work surface standing on an iron frame and a small frosted-glass window looking into the backyard which no one can see through. There is no access to the backyard. A step back towards the 'current room' 14 stairs lead to the upper floor. First



seven stairs then a turn to the left and then another seven stairs. To the right, the banister opens in order to easily transport things up and down to and from the basement. Towards the seventh step the banister to the right is damaged. The screws are hanging loose but it still feels safe to use. That banister is still in the same condition today. On the upper floor the staircase stops before two doors. The one to the right leads to a room of approximately 20 square metres. Opposite that door is a big sliding window looking onto the street, over the so-called 'current room'. To the left, the second door leads into a second room of approximately fifteen square meters that is above the toilets and the kitchenette. Two small windows with frosted-glass look over the backyard. The view is blocked when they are closed. Between the two windows, old heating pipes are rotting. The whole of the upper floor is covered by an old mosaic floor, and the walls are painted in the same old-fashioned creamy

white colour as the doors on the ground floor. In the days we are here, the first room functions as an office, and the second as a radio studio from which the 'circuits on air' web radio station transmits. Seven stairs down, then to the right another seven stairs down to the ground floor. Then to the right, the staircase continues to the basement. Seven stairs down then to the right and another seven stairs down. A heavy smell of humidity blocks the entrance. Straight ahead a double door leads to the main room of the basement and to the right, underneath the staircase, a narrow space functions as improvisatory storage. The main room in the basement is almost as big as the ground floor, approximately 85 square metres in size. The floor is covered in rough mosaic flooring. The room is divided by iron bars. One sliding door leads the way to the second half of the room. Remains of the unknown past of the building. From the ceiling bare light bulbs hang broken. There is no light in the basement.



## LEARNING TO

## TALK

*A hotel room. It's raining. The pitter patter of rain-drops. The wallpaper glitters. I run my hand across it, it gets covered in dust.*

Ugh. Yuck.

How disgusting.

*And I was supposed to go and sit down at the table with them and ask them a question. But I couldn't think what to ask them. The whole thing felt a bit weird.*

Ugh, its so revolting.

I can't smell anything at all.

Has it gone off, or what?

It's just a stinky cheese.

I just wanted to buy a good piece of cheese.

*(sentimental music)*

*Nine people hanging around on hotel beds, watching a slideshow. Ten photos taken from an aeroplane window. A few sunsets and lots of pictures of tired people on plastic chairs.*

If we do it, I would want to do it honestly, I guess. And earlier on, we were trying to work out what we'd actually been doing. Here were two professional filmmakers, and we were listening to them telling us that the set runner is the most important person, and then we're supposed to make a film.

We're playing at being professionals now. But we can't tell anyone that?!

Why?

Well, I suppose, perhaps the point would be to find other ways, ones that have nothing to do with professionalisation! It makes you so critical when you look back. Can we do this? When we were looking at the pictures just now, that's exactly what was happening. We were just sitting there, pretending.

When really it's more of a social thing.

You have to get to know one another first and learn how to talk. Having your say, or being forced to keep quiet, or having to listen till you're bored stiff. The project used to be much more physical, but now the product has become more important.

But 'learning to talk' is a nice image for telling a story, don't you think?

Learning to talk. LEARNING TO TALK.

Were there any particular moments when you felt this was happening?

Where you could say that this was exactly what was being initiated?

Where did talking happen?

Well, what about the evening before the private view?

What were we doing then?

We were sitting upstairs in the little room, still drinking beer.

The room where you were all telling these stories?

I don't remember, weren't we working insanely hard?

No, that's just the point. At some stage we just stopped and realised we were actually doing pretty well. And although we really had no time at all, because each of us had a million things to do in their own world, suddenly we were all super relaxed about it and we got it together. There was none of this: I can't be arsed, it's all shit anyway, when everyone is doing their own thing and nothing is going on between people, there was no negativity. But somehow in our state of exhaustion we all quite intuitively

decided to make time together, although we actually had no time at all.

Was the oracle that kind of a moment, too?

Ok, I have a confession to make. I went up the hill as well, but I never got it. I was always just sitting around, and I never understood the texts people were reading. I didn't get it and at some point I just walked down again.

I have no idea, what was the oracle?

We were passing around gold Euro coins made of chocolate. Then I ate mine. And then they said, ok, now you can cash that in with the oracle, that was D. And I didn't get it and I had no money for the oracle so I walked down again.

*Someone sits in the cupboard and closes the door. She is gone.*

I couldn't sit because the prickles were sticking right into my bum, I had to lie on my stomach the whole time.

I don't remember what it was about either!

It wasn't about anything, it was just spectacle.

What would we be saying now if we'd had a party in the hotel room?



I think you always need something like that. It was one of those euphoric moments. I think it was just what was needed in that moment, even if it wasn't immediately clear what was going on at first.

You're standing around somewhere, drunk, wearing some costume, thinking it makes no sense at all.

What connected us was our aggression against our own project.

What would have happened if it had turned out exactly as we had imagined it?

I feel a bit like we're on a school trip to the countryside. I'm the kid and the concierge is the adult who's after me and my evil deeds, because he's convinced that I could commit some evil deed at any moment, something forbidden. Although I know I'm not about to do anything forbidden, I still feel that way all of a sudden. The concierge is nice enough, but we're dependent on him for everything we want to do, so we have to be nice and well behaved so that he has no reason to chuck us out. This is what made me realise that we are tolerated here, but only under certain conditions. We have paid for two people to stay, so he wants the rest of us to leave at midnight.

I find it pretty funny actually, this aspiration to make good art now. We land ourselves a project where we set ourselves some task and it ends up becoming a punishment, one we've actually imposed on ourselves. And it stops everyone getting together and all the criticism gets directed at the task we have set ourselves.

When we were cutting the film and working on things in smaller groups, I found it really great to watch how everywhere things were growing.

Yes, if we hadn't set ourselves this task, the social element would never come into being. No matter which group you sat with, there was always an objective that brought everyone together, and at the start no one is worried about what the outcome will be. Maybe you would always end up with similar structures. Some people are more focussed on getting good results and others are more interested in coming together because of the objective and in the process of negotiating something.

I think both sides have very different ideas of what constitutes good results.

Perhaps you always need a notion of an enemy, but this notion is always going to be yourself. You create an alien, to fight against, so that you can save the world, but this enemy is always ourselves in the end, and the egotistical desire to save the world.

The alternative would be to all get drunk together and walk up a hill and have fun.

I'm just interested in studying together. Reading texts together. Working on something together, having an exchange of ideas. Perhaps something more oriented towards political events. Because that never happens here somehow.

That should maybe be the conference, but then that might be too tidy and over-organised, too clean, to really hash anything out.

Yes, but maybe that's the point, the third option between the objective which is what brings people together with the political will to make a change, and the desire for a social atmosphere, where a group can be allowed to grow that will also practise this among themselves in day-to-day life.

*The man sitting opposite me talks into his phone about the people he has already sold real estate to. The table next to me on the left is talking about fighter jets and rifle clubs. I am scared to listen any longer, suspecting that the conversation will drift towards Pegida before long. Before that the man was talking to the Romanian waiter and then he explained to his colleague that the place where the Romanian came from used to belong to Germany. I turn to the small group and see that the men are wearing suits in various shades of grey with pastel-coloured shirts. Now the man's onto the minimum wage in some rich country where even chamber maids earn more than he does. Writing this down is making me angry. I press the play button again.*

Why do we always go so far from reality?

But that's the danger with an alien.

It's so incredibly intangible and completely abstract.

That's what you call Reality through Fiction.

It's also distracting when you always start reading a text together.

It's better to sit in a hotel and just have all the books lying in front of you.

I run my hand over the pale beige carpet and think about carpet cleaners. They must have a pretty good one here. We met up for rounds of discussions, we studied together and then went for food, and that made it fun to go eating together. What do we do this for? What conclusion have we drawn from all the things we have worked on together? In these moments we made decisions about things, precisely because we were so annoyed.

Somehow you get a bit disoriented in a situation where you are discussing things and everyone is having their say. It's definitely good to direct it somewhere, to stop it being too abstract and theoretical. Although here we are at the question of professionalisation again!?

At the point when you realise there are shared concerns, where this atmosphere arises, it might be possible to find an option 3.1, a sort of plan B. Without things falling back into the usual structures of success, intent, ambition.



Expectations.

There's mostly no time for that.

No! He's turned on the TV. Now it really is like a skiing holiday. Turn it off!

Turn it off, it makes the atmosphere really weird.

We were just being so productive.

A totally normal system that we have to go through.

The whole thing was planned from start to finish.

Is it the concierge at the DAAD who sets the deadlines? Here, take the money and keep to the specifications. He gives and to establish trust he wants our promise.

He is totally sweet as well. He's also a conservative bastard but he did really look after us.

Coming up with assignments, keeping to specifications. The funding is calculated so far in advance.

If I already know what will be happening two years in advance, why should I still do it?

*I'm standing in the lift, photographing the holy water receptacle with my phone. I imagine a person crossing themselves, terrified that the lift will suddenly plummet to the ground.*

*When I re-enter the lift later on, there's no doubt any more. It is not a holy water receptacle, it's an ashtray. But isn't smoking in a lift as stupid as crossing yourself?*

Do we expect strangers to buy this somewhere? I wouldn't buy something like this.

Me neither.

Texts about aliens, I'm serious. Who wants to read something like that?

Or who wants to read about what we were feeling while we were making some film?

It's just something to put in your portfolio.

Good question.

I think we could make a foldout leaflet that says: Fuck you, Dad, and then we would have fulfilled our promise.

That goes against our own project. It flies in the face of it and now we use the money for...

Even if I was given it as a gift, I still wouldn't read it, even if it was a gift, you know.

I would never read it.

I would put it on my shelf as a vindication for my friends who don't study art. I have no interest in reading what we were feeling when we were in Delhi doing that.

I will take it off the shelf, show it to someone, and then put it back.

It would mean spending all that time and getting totally exhausted just to make yet another artist's book.

But perhaps it doesn't matter anyway.

I can also imagine it as something super nice. All of us in our own editorial office with things happening in every corner, and you walk through the room and you see a new drawing there, a new text there, and you start talking about an interesting thought, reflecting on things as we work... It would be great if we could generate an atmosphere like this, if we had enough time, if we would allow ourselves the time. Without being bullied into a particular direction, because it has to be finished and has to look the way we said it would beforehand.

It was like that with the film, too, at times, and then things took a turn in another direction. But why?

The shared talking was missing, the joint research, much more concentrated and longer.

But that's all so eager-beaver as well, all that learning to talk together, rattling off the usual intellectual discussions, and playing the game the way it has to be played.

Oh, can we smoke in here please?

To me, that is professionalisation. Doing it as should be done.

I dunno, it's about riding a wave together, however flowery that sounds.

And then the knot, and then the universe, and bla bla bla, but it all leads nowhere.

We read about speculative realism and learn to talk about it, and present it at symposiums and make a film.

That was total shit in the gallery, our film was a pile of crap, the way the individual films were cut together and forced on top of each other.

I disagree. You shouldn't always rip everything to shreds.

It's not such a bad thing, if your own



film goes under within the group. But instead of thinking about it more and trying other options, we were bombarded with workshops because the money had to be spent and it was part of our self-imposed system.

Now I've totally moved off topic.

I moved off topic because I was taking a photo.

So we have the specifications and after a certain point we start struggling with them, perhaps this time, we should just not try to keep to them. We have our grey areas and maybe something brilliant comes out of it and maybe not, but we will feel better about it that way.

Too many options, not enough alternatives. Feeling paralysed. Standing at the crossroads of too many paths, in a room with too many doors.

Criticism is something you always level towards yourself and criticism is all about having the feeling that we are the ones who are creating the thing ourselves and we are the ones setting the specifications and by criticising your own specifications you can change them again.

Come on, let's all go down for another cigarette. Then you can have a

chat with the concierge.  
Did you give him your ID by the way?

Recently a young receptionist from the Hotel Bayerischer Hof told me about a group of twenty-year-olds who spent the night in a huge suite and had a party. The reception made sure things didn't get too loud and around 8 in the morning the group left the hotel in a totally civilised manner. As long as someone hands over a credit card, everything is covered, the receptionist said.

I didn't show it to him but I just said that we had to prepare for an important conference and that seemed to convince him.

## >the consideration **mechanisms**

```
01.
01.
01.
02. //Functions Manual for consideration mechanisms
03. >mechanism_sample{//title mechanism after underscore
04. >read_[...]{input phrases from initial text.
05. >consider_parameter[...]{reference}]{excerpts-parameters to be considered
    from participants texts. Inside "{reference}" refer to original text in form
    of page\text name\contributors name.
06. >consider_fact[...]{facts-events to be considered not necessarily included
    in the publicized material
07. >consider_interview[...]{input from interviews conducted with participants
    of the survival kit about the survival kit
08. }
09. >interpret_sample{//name mechanism to interpret after underscore and draw your
    conclusion
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.
16.
17. //Example about collectivity
18. >mechanism_collectivity{
19. >read_[introduce the students to new contexts and ways of working (such as
    workshops, seminars, collaborative work, artistic research, group exhibitions,
    project space and publication) in order to give them the tools and skills to
    prepare them for their professional life as artists.
20. >consider_parameter[In a group you become a different body{wormhole}]
21. >consider_parameter[Does individual profit grow out of this body, and if it
    does, what is the relation between the leftover body parts and the parts that
    succeed?{wormhole}]
22. >consider_parameter[Feeling individual, in a group you become a different
    body. This body is fragile, it always falls apart and gets new weird bodyparts
    in addition. Illnesses tumors, all of this is part of that body. {wormhole}]
23. >consider_fact[out of the 30 available positions on the survival-kit pro-
    gramme there have been 60 students in total occupying them in the 3-year dura-
    tion]
24. >consider_interview[I know that there were some people that left, because
    it wasn't what they were expecting.]
25. ]
26. }
27. >interpret_collectivity
28.
29.
30.
31.
32.
```



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33.
34.
35.
36.
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38.
39.
40.
41.
42.
43.
44.
45. >mechanism_collectivityNo2{
46. >read_[we will organize and realize a mutual exchange, collaborative prax-
    is and research based project with the participation of students and academic
    staff from both universities
47. >consider_interview[We always have to adapt to the group and not like to-
    tally adapt, bring your own stuff, but you also have to make a step back and
    let also other people, who have a totally different approach, do it, because
    then it's collective. But I've also learnt what other people do, how they
    think and how are their processes.]
48. >consider_interview[They were always these main people who joined every-
    thing and then people who liked passing.]
49. >consider_fact[There are 2 paid co-ordinators and 4 paid student assistants
    positions in the survival-kit programme]
50. ]
51. >read_[It is also in our particular concern to establish infrastructures and
    networks that will remain and continue over the framework of this 3-year coop-
    eration
52. >consider_interview[I still try to be part, because I think it's interest-
    ing what's happening. Even though it doesn't work out that well sometimes. But
    I think these are also interesting processes, you can learn from them.]
53. >consider_parameter[People happened. I saw many situations around me and
    nothing happened and now I quit. {a big table easy to stretch}]
54. >consider_parameter[the fate of such groups is often, though not always,
    doomed. {Managers of collectivity}]
55. >consider_interview[but I think it's not always about results. Of course
    it is important, but if you work as a group you should think first of other
    things. I think it was a fine study, the best way of studying.]
56. >consider_fact[co-ordinators and participants of the programme are looking
    into ways to repeat same or similar educational structure after the surviv-
    al-kit ends.]
57. ]
58. }
59. >interpret_collectivityNo2
60.
61.
62.
63.

```

## >the\_consideration\_mechanisms

```

01.
01.
01.
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03. >mechanism_sample{//title mechanism after underscore
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    project space and publication) in order to give them the tools and skills to
    prepare them for their professional life as artists.
20. >consider_parameter[In a group you become a different body{wormhole}]
21. >consider_parameter[Does individual profit grow out of this body, and if it
    does, what is the relation between the leftover body parts and the parts that
    succeed?{wormhole}]
22. >consider_parameter[Feeling dividual, in a group you become a different
    body. This body is fragile, it always falls apart and gets new weird bodyparts
    in addition. Illnesses tumors, all of this is part of that body. {wormhole}]
23. >consider_fact[out of the 30 available positions on the survival-kit pro-
    gramme there have been 60 students in total occupying them in the 3-year dura-
    tion]
24. >consider_interview[I know that there were some people that left, because
    it wasn't what they were expecting.]
25. ]
26. }
27. >interpret_collectivity
28.
29.
30.
31.
32.

```



## Survival Kit

educational and artistic research programme

Within the coming three years we will organize and realize a mutual exchange, collaborative praxis and research based project with the participation of students and academic staff from both universities.

Planned are a series of activities that will gradually introduce the students to new contexts and ways of working (such as workshops, seminars, collaborative work, artistic research, group exhibitions, project space and publication) in order to give them the tools and skills to prepare them for their professional life as artists.

It is also in our particular concern to establish infrastructures and networks that will remain and continue over the framework of this 3-year cooperation and could accompany our students to their professional career.

We want to distance ourselves from the idea that relevant, contemporary artistic practices are forced to stand in the shadow of the crisis, rather, we are concerned with the question of how to step out of this shadow and conceive artistic practices as part of our total reality and its constant transformation.

We believe that art, too, plays an important role in opening up new political and social horizons, but not a subservient one – as is the case with much of the so-called 'political art' today. Art should not be reduced to a mere megaphone of political, social and economic themes and demands.

However, artists do not exist outside of the existing circumstances, and therefore have to address concrete and acute problems, whether material, theoretical or psychological, in order to secure new forms and contents of artistic production. In the long-term perspective intellectual and artistic freedom depends on this and ought to be defended against neoliberal attacks, market interests and material constrictions.

This leads us to the idea of a '**survival kit**' which is neither satisfied with utopian enthusiasms, nor to limiting itself to a short-term view of how to manage during the 'crisis'.

The intention is to identify, defend and develop the foundations necessary not only for individual artistic survival, but also for fulfilled existence and human activity in the context of society as a whole.

Main questions and tasks of the educational program are:

- How can we learn to understand the historical and economic developments through this exchange project?
- How can we learn to apprehend their political, artistic and aesthetic outcomes?
- How can we produce common ground as result?
- How can we form a common agenda against the undesirable effects (in both countries!)?

Final aim of the project is to create knowledge and new structures for an innovative, in-depth and sustainable model of art education.

## Survival Kit

educational and artistic research programme

DAAD Programme: **Partnerships with Greek Institutions of Higher Education 2014 - 2016**

A Cooperation between the **Academy of Fine Art Munich (ADBK)** and the **Athens School of Fine Arts (ASFA)**

### OPEN CALL

**Students are kindly invited to apply for participation in the DAAD funded exchange and artistic research programme "SURVIVAL KIT" which will begin in March 2014.**

The project is aimed at students across years and artistic disciplines with a specific interest in:

- Collaborative artistic practice
- Artistic research
- Interdisciplinary and participatory modes of working in performance, video, installation, sound
- Artistic dialogue and self-organisation
- Innovative models of education

Final selection will consist of 13 Students from the Department of Visual Arts and 2 Students from the Department of Theory and History of Arts

### DEADLINE: Friday 7. March 2014

To apply please submit:

- Application Form
- Curriculum Vitae
- Artist Portfolio
- Artist Statement (300 words, in English)
- Letter of Intention (300 words, in English)

Applications in digital format only accepted in .pdf file format.

Applicants may send their proposals in digital or printed form to the Careers Office of ASFA ([elenakar@asfa.gr](mailto:elenakar@asfa.gr)) / Patision 42, 10682, Athens / Tel. 210.3897159) till Friday 7. March 2014

### INFORMATION EVENT

**TUESDAY 25. FEBRUARY 2014, 14:00, ASFA Theatre, Peiraios Str. 256**

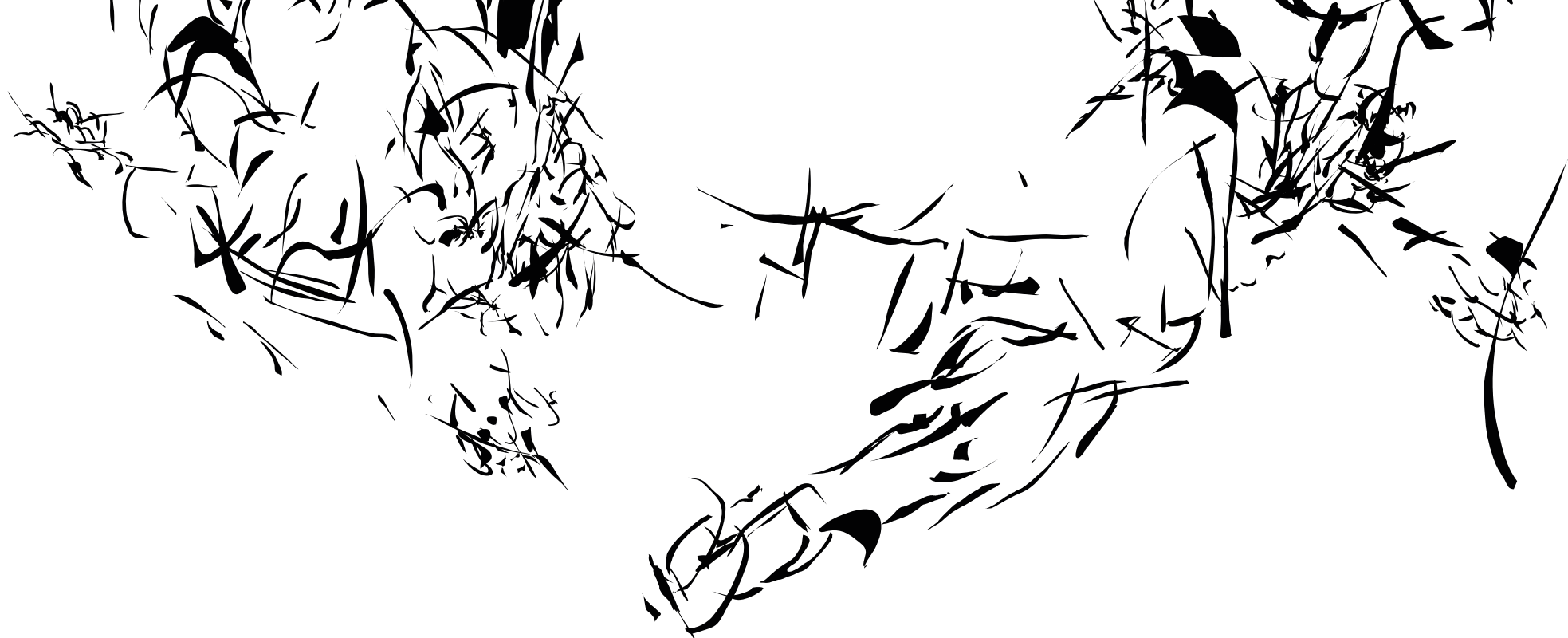














## IN PRAISE OF ROUTINE

*in which you lack nothing and excess can  
flourish in lieu of serving the project*



I try to give a rhythm to what I do, which hardly changes seven days a week. Whatever ingrains itself as habit becomes routine. Whenever routine gets interrupted, it has to be set back in motion. When that motion runs consistently from day to day, it flows and almost takes care of itself.

Still groggy from sleep, I try to find the beat as soon as I wake up. Although I'm barely awake and every action feels impossible, I still do it. To synchronise my hands with the rhythm, I don't need to be struck by a sudden idea. There are plenty lingering on from the day before, and a loophole will turn up soon enough.

After an hour, at six, I smoke my second cigarette. On working days, I lose the beat for the first time around seven o'clock. I can keep it up a little longer on the weekend. But during the week, I anticipate that the alarm is going to go off anytime now. Before that happens, I rouse my son from sleep, go straight down to the street and buy bread. We eat breakfast until it's time for me to take him to school. After that, I start writing again. Under pressure, I quicken the pace briefly before I go swimming for twenty minutes at nine. Without paying attention to the time, I try to do everything so monotonously that my neighbours could set their clocks by me. There has to be an element of boredom, too, so I can let it drive me. Not overly excited, I stare at the screen and press

the buttons. At 12, the rhythm leaves me. I feel a momentary pang of melancholy as I brush up against the sense of a latent void.

Nothing is accomplished through rhythm alone. There are other rules, too. I'm not allowed to sit at any desk, doing so would be too reminiscent of work. It has to be a table that has another function, such as the kitchen table, which is for eating, and where writing is only secondary. Whatever I do should operate on the edge of leisure. I also like the thought of my neighbours whispering, 'Oh, that poor unemployed guy, at least he knows how to keep busy.' I would like no one to expect anything, let alone entertain the idea that I'm researching something. Just the thought of obscene questions regarding 'what I am working on right now' is unpleasant. If an offence like that does occur, I stammer out some gibberish that nobody would care to listen to for more than a minute. It goes without saying that I don't call what I do work. In the margins of my expectation—free space, I keep busy. My business is like smoking. I can't entirely explain it, but I derive great pleasure from it, can rhapsodise about it and will do it again tomorrow. At this point, I can smoke in such a way that others feel like smoking, too, when they watch me. I am great at enticing non-smokers to smoke. And I hope to get to the same point in writing, too.

Some people criticise my list of steps to reconquer a space for unjustified business. They say I'm a parasite, because I let other people give me temporary lifts on their projects. Aside from enjoying the contact, I experience short-term movement with people who are working toward something as an invigorating disturbance that keeps me from getting mired in the soup of my own system. So as not to inextricably entangle myself in those external disturbances, I take care not to let anyone give me a lift too often. It's a question of balance, and I have to pay attention to it from every point of view.

Sometimes my rhythm condenses into ideas of goals. If I like them, I sail with them, let their wind carry me along for awhile—only to jump back off at the right moment and resume my routine with no prospects. That I would, in that state, rather operate slightly under the radar, is founded in the experience that things run along just fine that way and will continue to do so. Rhythm replaces both justification and goal, and it gives me the grounding necessary to maintain a relatively disconnected form of productivity that moves parallel to the mainstream. Its continual routine gives me the footing that keeps me from plunging into a maelstrom of certain ideas of my surroundings. The advantage a footing has over a stance is that the body can stay in motion. It allows for a flexibility that steers clear of an undertow which is produced by a particular language—in addition to money—and makes self-determined action nearly impossible. That language uses the word researching in an inflationary way to manage behaviour wherever the action of artists is supposed to get translated into words. How researching in particular was able to devolve into effective jargon is understandable. Aside from the boom surrounding digital search machines, there has been a surge in so-called artistic research, a development both



welcomed and fostered at an institutional level. Underlying motives like, for instance, equal rights for artistic and scientific methods and/or imparting techniques previously considered secret knowledge, might well have been benevolent. But at this point, precisely because of its efforts at levelling the playing field, normalisation and transparency, artistic research reveals itself primarily as a mechanism for integrating artistic processes into the society of control.

The subsequent motion can be better evaluated retrospectively using a formula: What was the question? Did you keep it in mind, and did you proceed methodically? What we now call work is oriented towards added value, towards gaining insight and the communication thereof. While those things may not be handled all too strictly, with the help of an instruction manual, deeds can still be packed into a framework conducive to manageability. That makes artistic research attractive to a lot of people. A construction of meaning that is supposed to come from having gained insight masks the rather difficult question regarding the unclear ‘why’ behind acts of art. If moving through the fog without clear reason provokes a sense of insecurity, it no longer has to be endured. Comfortable, but deprived of special possibilities, those liberated from the risk posed by uncontrolled motion lean back and don’t need to pay much attention to what else is going on, or where they might stray—since all currents have now been directed at the now known goal, and the way there appears transparent.

Artistic research is framed in the term ‘project’. It has gone so far that even painting a picture can be reduced to a ‘project’. The word seems to have replaced all other options. It initially spread through the administrative sector: if you want to use their money to further your own work, you have to package your desire into a project. Now people superpose the term over their own wishes in anticipatory obedience, dressing their deeds presentably in a relevancy qua socially recognised and market value. In using the apparently neutral word ‘project’—which, incidentally, is happy to pass itself off as progressive when it isn’t—artistic activity gets re-interpreted, and loses its open-endedness to a goal that is worked towards economically. The economy that enters the process through the project has its root in the Greek *oikos*, house. Its residents economise on wood, let’s say, so that their supply will be enough to keep the interior warm over the winter. The economising concern for the specified goal is meant to subdue the desire to light a huge fire in the fall, because then there might not be enough wood on hand later. In practical affairs, that is unquestionably appropriate. But when applied to the artistic process, the economical approach rapidly leads to the hum-drum. The unpredictable can’t unfold, because it is planned out for the generation of specific value. Signs are set, rather than sounded out independently. Tools run through a to-do list, rather than speaking for themselves. What lives and breathes in the material is only viewed as a means to an end. Calling your own motion a ‘project’ blocks the potentials that surge up in the process, because you need things to turn out according to plan: if the goal is reached, your feet

will stay on the ground. Why should you jump up in the air ecstatically on arrival when all you’ve done is reach a known end, instead of going for a disoriented and euphoric swim in the unknown?

The Duden dictionary of German defines a project as a plan, an undertaking, a draft, a scheme. Linguistically, it differs from the continual progression, whose motion can extend into the unknown. The word projection is close to the project. To project means to throw or cast forward and was initially used for drafting geometric forms on a surface. Later, the projector would cast images onto the screen at the movies. In the project, we’re dealing with the same word in the perfect participle: what has been thrown or cast forward. The throwing has been completed, and the distance covered by that act has become large enough to be planned on—meaning the architects of the plan can now use it to draw out their magical triangle of time, cost and scope.

In German, the project first appeared with relation to 17th century blueprints. The building is imagined and planned in draft form so that its actual construction can be undertaken. In the late 1960s, the term wandered into the field of art via the earth projects of American land art artists like Robert Smithson or Michael Heizer. Picturing the quantities of sand they would need to move in the desert to realise their visions, they started organising themselves like companies.

The project is everything but an open form. It is defined as a one-off plan in which managed activities adapt to assumed constraints for the sake of reaching a goal. According to the German industrial standard DIN 69901, a project comprises plans for work whose development is determined by a shortage of time, energy and materials. Lack results in pragmatic planning, thus the principle of added value insinuates itself into the artistic process. The discontinuous project subverts the infinite potential of the unforeseeable to the final control of the predictable. To guarantee control, the project builds on competence. Valorising human capacities means that the inherent powers of speech, technology and materials are suppressed. You try to take things into your own hands and carry them in a straight line to the goal. To arrive there, the project avoids the empty forms that are susceptible to invasion by unknowns and deviations. Bodies in motion are preoccupied with the idea of what they are supposed to become. Intuitive reactions and the sense of an inner necessity are rationalised away by goal-oriented pragmatism and shunted into the role of decor. You listen to the voice of reason, which can be followed unquestioningly, ignoring the most mysterious-sounding voices and their intoxicating suggestions.

While the land artists were introducing the project to art, the New York gallerist and carpet dealer Seth Siegelaub was introducing the term to the art business, as part of his effort to come up with a commodifying framework for con-



ceptual art. Due to his lack of financial success as an art dealer, Siegelau, who sold carpets to finance his gallery, proceeded particularly systematically. Faced with real-world failure, he wanted at the very least to leave behind a model for possible business. As with most attempts at reconciling artists' interests with a capitalist structure, the antagonism between the logic of trade and overspending in the artistic working process could not be resolved.

In Europe, the project was rediscovered in the 1990s, at a time when work was taking on increasingly immaterial forms whose fleeting nature required a linguistic vessel. The expansion of possibilities for what art could be came into conflict with a social-democratic critique that accused artists of having invented the prototype of neoliberal 'self-exploitation', given their tendency to squander their energy uneconomically. In its fatal argumentum a contrario, that critique acknowledges the prevailing order of lack instead of anyone's own deviation from it. It is a destructive fallacy that is activated whenever an artistic search becomes linguistically formalised in accordance with the logic of economic considerations as a project, and subordinated to a reluctant economising force. Carried in the slipstream of artistic research's establishment qua genre, the project wandered from official jargon into everyday speech over the course of the 2000s. What claims to be a contemporary shift—as if artists hadn't always been researching in various ways—is upon closer inspection hardly more than a watered-down readiness to recognise the prevailing reality, assimilate deviations from it, and put humans back in the centre as the dominant servants of added value.

Things could have gone much further in the opposite direction, since people started to leave behind the human-centred approach in art. The painter Willi Baumeister already wrote, 'the artist doesn't know how to do anything' in *Das Unbekannte als zentraler Wert* (The Unknown as Central Value) 70 years ago. In Baumeister's model of formation, artists make do with the role of the initiator. 'A certain type of speculative person' projects the 'vision-object' as movement, but leaves off what has been set in motion on the trail to the 'apparent goal' and observes how it takes off. 'The prefixed goal only operated as an incentive' to swim out in disconnected motion and penetrate the blind spot of the known. In surrendering the task of control, previously unknown realities can be accessed.

To avoid the sphere of knowns, it seems imperative to distance yourself from their language and order. Here, the question arises as to whether artistic potential is being blocked because the concept of work now seems contaminated by project-based thinking. Perhaps this reading is neurotic, but might it be important not to underestimate the degree to which value systems use language to infiltrate behaviour. It becomes impossible to explore the unknown and because it is not time efficient. You economise and stick to the known, in order to get things done quickly. One possible emergency exit from that vicious circle is a continuity without beginning or end. Daily routine

can provide the easily overlooked escape clause needed to circumvent the stifling exigencies of the production of meaning. Getting started no longer poses a difficulty, because you never stop. You also revoke the authority to do something from external occasion.

A state of insecurity that can set in as a side effect of the elusiveness of meaning is mitigated by everyday routine-making. At some point, I don't even know anything else. That kind of routine enables me to sidestep the question of what I'm ultimately going to get for what I do, or resist relevancy traps and their baits of security and vanity.

To survive in the wrong environment, it might be smarter to confirm this non-criticism. Criticism doesn't only run the risk of optimising project culture by pointing out its blind spots, it also gives it meaning. The horse may be better harnessed the other way around: the more meaningless my treatment of what I do, the less I'll be forced to justify myself in response to the wrong line of questioning. What I do seems too small to ask about its relevancy. Being a meaningless dwarf, I can simply slip underneath the authority of a language that questions my value. In realities beneath the controlling standards of a misguided pretence, it's also easier to conspire without words and, in so doing, to avoid making yourself through communication. The apparent weakening of your self allows you to become one of many and therefore to grow.



# //CHASM//

A BRAND NEW SEQUENTIAL COLLAGE

IMAGINE YOU ARE FALLING. BUT THERE IS NO GROUND! PARADOXICALLY, WHILE YOU ARE FALLING, YOU WILL PROBABLY FEEL AS IF YOU ARE FLOATING, OR NOT EVEN MOVING AT ALL. FALLING IS RELATIONAL. IF THERE IS NOTHING TO FALL TOWARD, YOU MAY NOT EVEN BE AWARE YOU'RE FALLING...

WHOLE SOCIETIES AROUND YOU MAY BE FALLING JUST AS YOU ARE. AND IT MAY ACTUALLY FEEL LIKE PERFECT STASIS. AS YOU ARE FALLING, YOUR SENSE OF ORIENTATION MAY START TO PLAY ADDITIONAL TRICKS ON YOU. YOU MAY LOSE ANY SENSE OF ABOVE AND BELOW, BEFORE AND AFTER, OF YOURSELF AND YOUR BOUNDARIES...

TRADITIONAL MODES OF SEEING AND FEELING ARE SHATTERED. WHILE FALLING, PEOPLE MAY SENSE THEMSELVES AS BEING THINGS, WHILE THINGS MAY SENSE THAT THEY ARE PEOPLE.



I SUFFER!

SYMPTOMS?

MY BODY HAS BECOME A MERE FLEXION  
WITHIN THE VIRTUAL, A FRAGILE TEMPO-  
RARY AGGLUTINATION IN AN UNSTOPPABLE  
SEMIOTIC STREAM.  
AND THE STREAMING AND SWIRLING OF  
SIGNS HAVE BECOME SO DOMINANT THAT  
EVERY FLASH OF AUTHENTICITY APPEARS  
TO BE ARTIFICIAL, A BREAK, A PAUSE...  
AND ITS OWN END IS IN THE NATURE OF  
THE PAUSE!



OH, GET  
OVER IT!

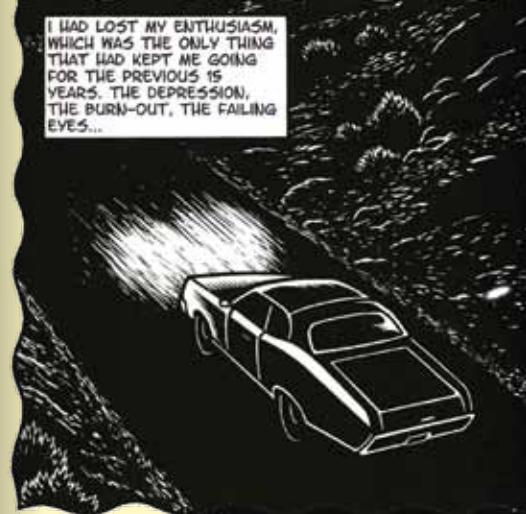
WHAT MAKES  
YOU CARRY ON  
THEN?

THAT WHAT  
MADE ME START.  
THE BEAUTY OF  
THE ACT.

THEY SAY THAT  
BEAUTY IS IN THE EYE  
OF THE BEHOLDER, AND  
WHAT IF THERE'S NO  
MORE BEHOLDER?



I HAD LOST MY ENTHUSIASM,  
WHICH WAS THE ONLY THING  
THAT HAD KEPT ME GOING  
FOR THE PREVIOUS 15  
YEARS. THE DEPRESSION,  
THE BURN-OUT, THE FAILING  
EYES...



I COULD NOT DECIDE WHAT TO DO. THEN MY  
BODY SEEMED TO SAY "CAN'T MAKE UP YOUR  
MIND? TRY THIS!" AND THE BACK FELL OF MY  
LEFT EYE.  
I'D NOTICED A TINY BLIND SPOT AT THE EDGE  
OF MY VISION, SO I MADE A DOCTOR'S AP-  
POINTMENT FOR THAT SATURDAY, THE ONLY  
DAY I NORMALLY DRIVE INTO TOWN.



...THE RETINA MUST BE  
PUSHED BACK AGAINST THE  
BACK OF THE EYEBALL.

AFTER  
SEALING  
THE RE-  
TINAL  
TEARS  
WITH  
LASER  
SURGERY

THIS WAY IT CAN  
REATTACH AND HEAL. THE  
ONLY WAY TO ACCOMPLISH  
THAT IS TO DRAIN THE LIQUID  
OUT OF THE EYEBALL AND  
FILL IT WITH A GAS  
BUBBLE.



THEN THE PATIENT MUST  
FACE DOWN SO THAT THE  
BUBBLE CAN PRESS THE  
RETINA BACK INTO PLACE.  
FACE DOWN EVERY MOMENT.

DAY AND NIGHT  
FOR AS LONG AS IT  
TAKES THE BUBBLE  
TO GRADUALLY  
DISAPPEAR.

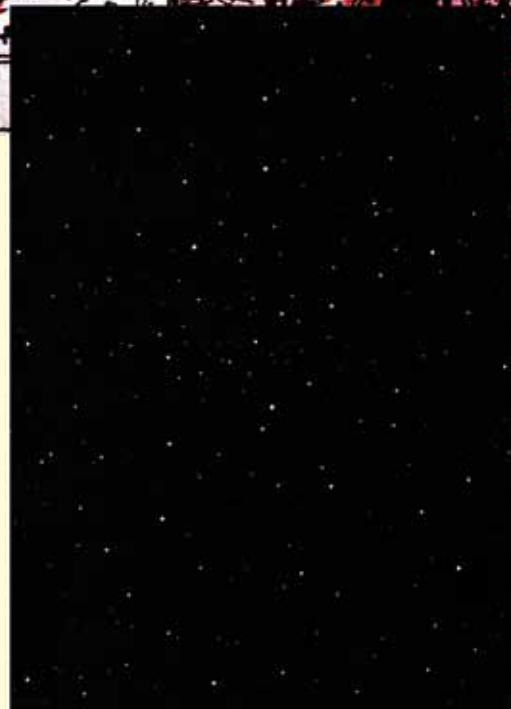






NEVERMIND. THEY'RE BECOMING INADEQUATE ANYWAY. PEOPLE DON'T WANT VISIBLE MACHINES ANY MORE. NO MORE ENGINES. NO MORE ACTION.

IN MY OPINION THE BEST MACHINES ARE MADE OF SUNSHINE. THEY'RE ALL LIGHT AND CLEAN AND NOTHING BUT SIGNALS AND ELECTRO-MAGNETIC WAVES.



THOSE WHO OPERATE IN THE CRACKS BETWEEN THE 2ND AND 3RD DIMENSION. THE FRACTIONAL SPACE WHERE DEPTH AND SURFACE MEET?



MAYBE THAT'S WHERE ALL THE PEOPLE WENT, TOO. LATELY IT'S GETTIN' PRETTY DEAD AROUND HERE



YEAH, IT'S BEEN QUITE A WHILE. I CAN'T EVEN RECALL WHAT THEY LOOKED LIKE.



THEY LEFT SOME  
SELF-IMAGES, SO THAT WE  
WOULD REMEMBER THEM.

URGH. SO WEIRD!  
LITTLE CUBES WITH MOVING  
SHAPES ON THE FRONT.

NO! THEY WERE  
RECTANGLES WITH  
PATTERNS ALL OVER.

SO THEY WEREN'T  
THAT DIFFERENT FROM  
US AFTER ALL?

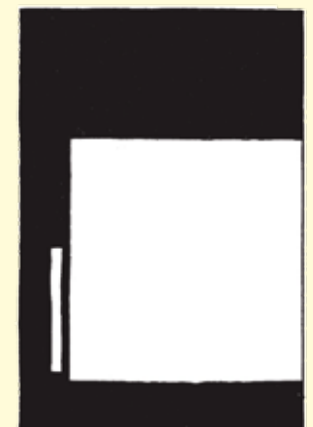
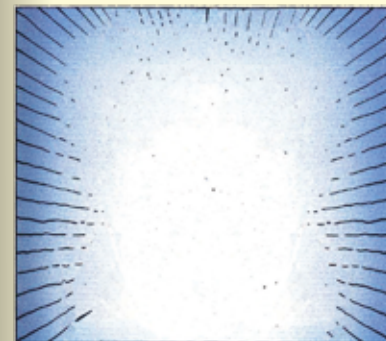
THEN MAYBE THIS IS  
FRACTIONAL SPACE?

WHAT?  
WHY?

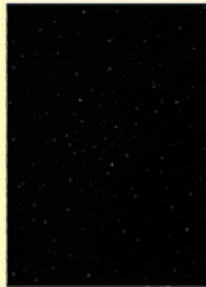
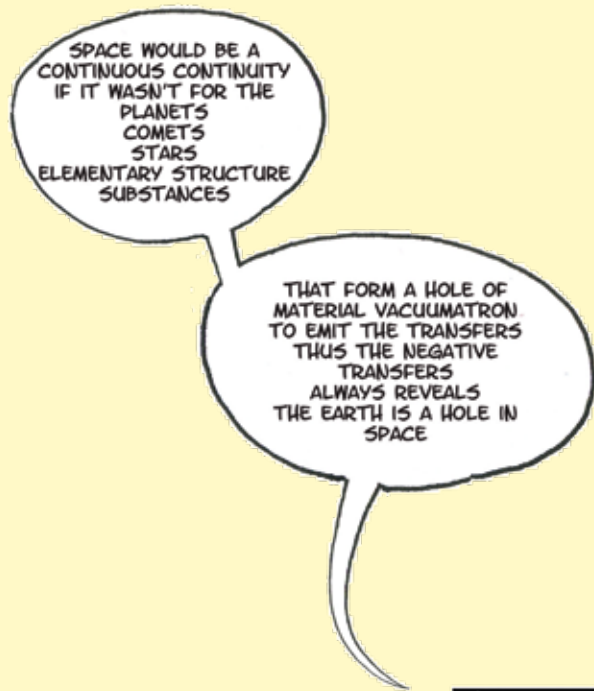
THERE ARE SO  
MANY IMAGES WITHOUT  
REFERENTS. SO MANY IMAGES  
WITHOUT REPRESENTATION.  
ALL THIS UNCOMMUNICATED  
INFORMATION DELVES INTO THE  
SCENERY. THE LANDSCAPES ARE  
CHANGING EVERY MINUTE.

NO, THEY AREN'T.  
NOTHING IS HAPPENING.  
NOTHING EVER HAPPENED.  
THE SEASONS REVOLVE  
AROUND THEIR OWN AXIS.  
THE HORIZON LOOPS. THIS  
IS COPY-PASTE  
TERRITORY.

C'MON! DON'T  
BE SO NIHILISTIC.  
IT WAS JUST A  
THOUGHT.







## FINAL CONVERSATION

### THE JOURNEY THE SOUL GOES THROUGH WHEN IT'S IN DEBT

*"Make a plan, and still yet another, but none will work."*  
Berthold Brecht, Mac the Knife

### AFTER THE CRISIS, GREECE BEGAN DE-INDUSTRIALISE RAPIDLY

The job that began in his youth, that gave him and his family security in exchange for his loyalty to the company, and put him under the constant supervision of his manager, one day ended suddenly. He stared at the little slip of paper the manager gave him that day and held back a tear. The tear hit the paper, the edges of the paper curled, the curling was reminiscent of a crumpling body he had seen once in a film. The paper dissolved entirely in the crumpling motion of his hand, and when he opened his eyes again he looked around at a room full of his friends. He let the paper drop, set his feet in motion, in the daytime, on the walk home, on the street he had walked for years.

The company was claiming bankruptcy after investment had been withdrawn by the international investors from northern European countries, who had been encouraged by the inclusion of Greece in the European Monetary Union in 2001, to invest in Greek business because of low interest rates found, at that time, in southern European countries—with the added bonus of high levels of risk accompanied by a new stability brought about by Greece becoming part of the European Monetary Union. This meant potential gains and made investors very happy and eager to invest.

The investors lived on risk, through the tendency of the market towards equilibrium, which in the process of converging and maintaining, would readily swing into disequilibrium as a result, and the eventual swing would take with it cars and homes and jobs and business, spiraling in a tornado of doubt, dragging terror into its hollow, vertiginous core. People would awaken the next morning and say, 'Hey, we were supposed to have a warning system or a safety net in place or something put aside for a rainy day'—but they found they had no one to address and nothing to legitimately complain about, because they didn't know who was responsible for the financial markets or the process by which they transform.



At this point in the story the process had just begun. When he lost his job nothing had swung, or been flung to the wall and the streets. Volatility was a shudder that took life in hand. The job which gave him security was ending, and so the balance achieved in his household economy would end too. The security had become part of his anatomy and now a placeless uncertainty opened up before him.

He walked home that evening, hung his coat on the hook, put his keys on the table and was about to tell his wife the news. But he noticed a newspaper that lay on the table. It read: *'Greek industrial production destroyed, severe unemployment, decline, panic, what will we say to our children?'*

A rotten feeling began to swell in his stomach. He read what he could from the front page of the newspaper and walked into the living room where his wife was waiting.

When people work together in a company they make a wage and receive it at the end of each week in the amount promised to them. This is a legally binding arrangement which if broken can be presented to their union. However, when much wider changes happen in the economy they have to find new routes, new voyages through which to travel, he said to his wife.

She inhaled and coughed very briskly. She was alarmed by what he was saying but what upset her more was his shaking and the quick, vigorous movement he made with his hands while he spoke. It was like he was strangling something with both hands.

**THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WENT FROM 7.7% IN 2009 TO JUST OVER 26% IN 2015. IN THE LAST QUARTER OF 2015, GREECE CREATED ONLY APPROXIMATELY 3000 JOBS.**

The group stand together on the wide neo-classical balcony that runs along the front of the school. They linger there in the darkness, drinking glasses of schnapps.

One of them says:

*'I just don't believe that anything big will happen.'*

*'Did you believe some time ago, that something will happen? That something will change?'*

*'Did something happen?'*

...they ask.

The one says:

*'People happened. I saw many situations around me and nothing happened and I've quit.'*

*'And now?'*

*'Now I'm fine with it,'* the one replied. *'Sometimes I get angry with things. But it's ok.'*

*'So you are tired?'*

*'Yeah,'* said the first one.

Then another pipes up,

*'And you're fine with it?'*

*'Yeah, I try to be fine with it.'*

*'Now you just try to manage your life?'* that other asked.

*'Uhm... and it's hard, as well, I think, at this age and in Greece. It's quite hard to decide and you can't do anything you like because of money of course.'*

*'I don't know. It's quite hard. I don't know what to say.'*

Silence.

A less shy one erupts suddenly,

*'When I was in Greece, there was the referendum and people thought something would change. Everyone voted NO! I completely understood why everyone voted NO. They said, 'I don't accept it as it is now.'*

*'Syriza?'*

*'I knew it from the beginning,'* said another standing in the dark.

They all begin to bubble with stored up tension and confused emotion.

*'I really felt that some people believed in this small movement.'*

But then a serious one says,

*'But really that's the problem, that a party is representing you... Because maybe you have to do it on your own and not think someone will do it for you, like Syriza.'*

They all look at the serious one in appreciation and agree.

*'Hmm. Yeah...'*

As the last statement hovers in the air, they turn their gaze over the balcony, out into the vast crowd gathered on the street, and strain to see an end to the masses of Greek people gathered there. But the mass doesn't end. Instead they see gaps and compression points emerge in the endless clusters of people. Surging in all directions, they keep circulating, a churning amalgamation of internal groups in a society that fragments like the dawn.

A doubt settles over them.

*'You want all those people to figure out how to rule for themselves, together?'*

*'Yes.'*

*'How will each of them know when the other ones are happy with a decision?'*

*'How will all these people decide?'*



They all begin to put their heads together to think of vast online systems in which everyone can make these decisions together. They begin to think that things can be alright in Greece today...

...when one of them says,

*'You want Greece to change into a self-organised society now, at the peak of economic chaos? How will we run the government, the economy, the healthcare system and everything else?'*

To which another replies:

*'Perhaps now is a good time to figure that out.'*

### INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION DECLINED 35% FROM ITS PEAK IN 2008

The detective leaned on the hood of the car and picked a piece of broken glass from the windshield. It's at moments like this that the law becomes the most curious thing, she thought. When the angry crowd erupted everyone knew things were going to explode. The idea that this could ever happen, that this world we live in and love could be destroyed is inconceivable. The life of one man is nothing compared to the millions upon millions now devastated.

Cordoned off were various sites of the morning's struggle – scattered, bloody objects strewn on the steps, already photographed. One cannot even begin to describe the severity of such a crime, if he did commit it. He had to pay somehow, but the way it happened was so fast and much more brutal than anyone could have imagined. On the steps of the courthouse a crowd of people gathered with signs, some threw rocks, and before long the steps were thronged with angry people, many of them rushing at the defendant as he emerged, while he was led from the police truck into the courthouse. At that moment, any weapon could have been concealed behind the signs, behind the people, inside a coat or in a bag. No one would have seen it, even though there were many armed police there.

It was the seventh day of the court case of the statistician in charge of Greek debt statistics, Mr. P., now on trial for knowingly promoting inaccurate information. The statistician, Mr. P., said on the witness stand that statistics experts are open to criticism if the numbers fail to add up, but that he is now living in an upside-down reality where he is being prosecuted for consistently getting his statistics right. 'My accuracy is my only crime,' he said, staring out defiantly into the courtroom as people jeered and hissed.

Mr. P. was an IMF official before he returned to Greece to be the main statistician at ELSTAT, the independent statistical agency set up as a condition of the first bailout package. Thus he became the main person in charge of statistics for the Greek nation from 2010 to 2015. He had arrived promising to impose European statistical standards on what many thought had been a shady business up until that time. It was rumoured that the Greek government had been adjusting the debt statistics since 1999 – the benchmark year to qualify for admission to the EMU – a move which later got them into the EMU in 2001. Mr. P. had, then, won the trust of Greece's creditors by producing the purportedly most accurate statement of the 2009 deficit within a few months of taking the helm at ELSTAT. While the Greek finance ministry estimated that the debt was 13.6%, Mr. P. revised the figure for the deficit to 15.4% of gross domestic product.

The detective looked into the crowd of people still lingering since the morning's dramatic events and ruminated about the state of things. She remembered that when a Spanish grandmother had killed herself because she lost her home in the economic crisis, she did so because every day the cost of living had grown more and more out of line with the norm in her country. The rapid misalignment in the valuation of goods meant that her needs had become unaffordable and now this could only be expressed as absence and violence. The grandmother, who was also a wife but foremost an independent woman throughout her life, was too frightened by the poverty she had experienced before in her lifetime. She did not want to catch that particular illness again. It is a misalignment of reality that people are experiencing now. A great misalignment in what sustains life. Perhaps Mr. P. did not lie, perhaps he was just imposing better standards – it might be, she thought. Perhaps it is foolish to blame him. You can't find one person to blame for all this horror because it wasn't all triggered by a few reports. There were administrators, politicians, debtors, creditors, investors, bankers and money managers, endless legions of people that all helped create this great misalignment. And once it was in motion it drew more and more people into it, it drew every living Greek individual into its fold and threw them like frail bodies being tossed against the rocks by the waves.

That is what the scene looked like earlier that day as Mr. P. lay on the steps of the Athenian courthouse: like a body pounded by the waves.

### BEFORE THE GREAT RECESSION, GREECE WAS A MAJOR PLAYER IN THE INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING AND BANKING INDUSTRIES

One of them stands near the centre of the group, next to a wall. She stops the conversation, evidently concerned.

*'Did you see that? That floating. It was just here.'*

*'What? That?'*



*'Yes, there it is. It's a little shape. Like a jelly fish,' said the one.*

*'A floater, like in your eye?' asked a friend.*

*'A bit like that, but real. Like a tiny jelly fish... there it is.'*

Then the same one says,

*'Can you get a towel so we can catch it or kill it?'*

She holds her hands around an area in front of her to catch the thing. She takes hold of it by cupping it her hands around it. Many of them peer in as she holds it and they look at it.

*'Is it a worm?'*

*'It's hard to see.'*

*'It's creepy.'*

*'How can it be a worm? It's not solid.'*

*'It is creepy how it floats like a spaceship.'*

*'It seems organic, it's transparent.'*

...they all say at once.

*'Oh shit. It's moving...'*

They move back abruptly and one of them screams.

Then it slips out.

One of them shouts,

*'It got away, asshole.'*

*'Where is it now?'*

The first one tells her friends to clear away from the area. Looking into the room she squints and concentrates on the task.

Another who is looking too sees it, they swipe at it, but it slips in front of something light and can't be seen anymore. They begin to look again.

The one that was called a name asks,

*'Why did you call me asshole?'*

*'It's gone. Where is it?'*

The other says, *'I don't see it... I give up.'*

*'But you were the one who saw it the second time, maybe you'll see it again.'*

*'I'm not sure. Maybe I didn't see it after all,' said the friend.*

*'What? Of course you saw it. We were just looking at it.'*

*Another says, 'I'm not sure I ever saw it either, to be honest.'*

An hour later, the one continues to search high and low throughout the room as the rest grow worried about her, or walk away, or get frustrated, or find it funny or sad. The one cannot find the thing so she starts to wonder whether it has possibly slipped into her hair somehow. Or maybe

even into her mouth or eyes. But when the one talks about it to the others it becomes very clear that something has changed.

The group ask her to go to the other side of the door because they are worried about what the search for the thing is doing to her. It is clearly undermining her mental health.

*'It was small at first but if it gets bigger it will be dangerous,' she says.*

*'It seemed dangerous to start with, don't you remember?'*

They shrug.

*'...maybe poisonous. Or maybe it will make us all ill.'*

With that the door is closed.

The first one wonders if they aren't right to send her away.

She leans against the door and starts to feel a strange sensation in her stomach, wondering how long it will be before the thing takes its full effect.

**IN 2015, ALMOST 40% OF THE POPULATION IN GREECE WAS BELOW OR CLOSE TO THE POVERTY LINE**

They sit inside the huge night eye of the classroom, unable to understand how education has become what it now is for them. The vast eye opens suddenly and they are stunned by the view below. A blue globe spinning gently, the earth, its shape a sphere dissolving into darkness, but not with sharp definition as you might imagine. The earth is streaked in colours, so many and so various that they cannot see them all at once, as if the light refracting from below continues to refract a blinding ricochet in their eyes as well. Shapes and spaces, hollows and cracks and other depths of the earth's forms. From inside the cracks spills forth flowing oceans and rivers each wider and longer than the previous, the waters endless and larger than the land. Where the waters dry and hold landmass, mountains and plateaus, deserts and tundras, cities and villages sit in day and in night. In those towns, they see action happening among people, where the people talk and hold events and form businesses which they will attend to.

*'I have a question,' said one: 'Looking down at the bountiful clarity of life, what do we find we regret? Who are we trying to find answers for in this exercise? Whose approval are we trying to earn? Is it the angel of world history that we want to make smile? Or the ghost of art history's failed past returning to remind us how art is once again lost? Or is it the lonesome judge at the end of all narratives who, as surely as he hovers in the pages of our text books and becomes one with our teachers, inevitably writes these statements we speak?'*



With their final terminus in mind, the group turn back to the glowing, milky orb and watch it pulsate and rotate. They are alone with it and yet they see millions upon millions of people moving below, meeting, associating with one other and changing in the process. They see gatherings and transactions happening in millions of places at once, between small groups and large ones, some in hoards that run toward one another, others in single file. Even though this action involves complex and detailed events, it is still intelligible to them. As each process unfolds it pulls with it accumulated meaning, in an endless series of strengths, stacked upon other powers and grouped into sections, extending into histories of people and places.

'That must be Guyana.' 'That's Sri Lanka.' 'That's Greenland.' 'North Korea.'

Then one particular shift stands out to them in an odd shape, happening in the past but culminating now. Germany is still, yet it is going through incredible changes, social changes not geographic ones and therefore harder to see but visible; harder to interpret but they interpret them still. The German economy begins to push down wages with all its might, steadily compressing its internal labour force, making them more precarious by shortening hours and redrawing contracts. They watch as the nation of Germany instates slow but steady measures to decrease national labour costs by bringing in casualisation where once were steady jobs, and then the invention of completely new job statuses such as mini-jobs, that lack any stability whatsoever. In this way, German competitiveness begins to overtake the job markets of other European countries. Because job growth in one country connects in multiple ways to labour markets throughout Europe and internationally, the competitiveness and economies of peripheral European Nations, such as Greece begins to slow.

They watched as German businesses toppled other European businesses as tumbling wages undercut the competitive advantage of the southern countries that had lower wages in line with lower inflation. The German working people, on some level, were losing their standard of living and job security to gain by keeping their jobs. Meanwhile working people in countries such as Greece lost gradually and eventually lost everything, completely out of work and out of choices.

They turn away stupefied. They couldn't watch anymore. It wasn't over yet and they realise that the ending will probably decide when and how the class will finish. They know it has to come to a close. This will be one type of fate, they say to each other. Whatever this is, it will be what we as a group have managed to achieve, in this place where an artistic intention meets a political drive and becomes a singular paradox that must eventually hurt itself. It seems this might be our final conversation.

**BY THE 2015 REFERENDUM, THE INCOME OF THE POORER 10% OF THE POPULATION HAD BEEN REDUCED BY 86% COMPARED TO ONLY 17-20% FOR THE RICHER 30% OF THE POPULATION.**

*IMF meeting transcript:*

THOMSEN: What is going to bring it all to a decision point? In the past there has been only one time when the decision has been made and then that was when they were about to run out of money seriously and to default. Right?

VELCULESCU: Right!

THOMSEN: And possibly this is what is going to happen again. In that case, it drags on until July, and clearly the Europeans are not going to have any discussions for a month before the Brexits and so, at some stage they will want to take a break and then they want to start again after the European referendum.

VELCULESCU: We should try and do something in April.

THOMSEN: But that is not an 'event'. That is not going to cause them to... That discussion can go on for a long time. And they are just leading them down the road... Why are they leading them down the road? Because they are not close to the event, whatever it is.

VELCULESCU: I agree that we need an 'event', but I don't know what that will be.

Narrator: Let me decode the scene before you. An 'event' is a financial crisis bringing Greece close to default. Just like last year in 2015, when the banks closed, millions of people faced economic and psychological catastrophe. In other words, it is the whole of Europe that the IMF is conspiring to hit with the shock doctrine. Only this time, the IMF wants to inflict that catastrophe on a nation holding tens of thousands of refugees and tasked with one of the most complex and legally dubious international border policing missions in modern history.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> The statement by the 'narrator' was written by Paul Mason who also published the accompanying IMF transcript. The transcript is printed verbatim above with the section of Mason's commentary quoted with only small changes. This originally appeared here: <https://www.socialeurope.eu/2016/04/imf-plots-new-credit-event-greece/>



# PROJECT SPACES, MANAGERS OF COLLECTIVITY

BY JEAN PAUL TARZANAKIS

In the early 2000s, various artists' groups and project spaces emerged in Athens in response to a large gap in the art scene. The absence of 'alternative' spaces, in conjunction with social and political conditions, proved to be fertile ground for the emergence of these groups, whose actions stood out beyond the limits of 'traditional' exhibition spaces. In this article, I will discuss the groups: [Green Park](#), [State of Concept](#) and [Bangladesh](#), focusing on the most controversial case of that period, [Circuits and Currents](#). This seemingly random selection is based on characteristics shared by all three groups concerning the operating and organisational structures of their parallel activities.

One extreme is occupied by [State of Concept](#), which represents the most organised and commercial form of 'alternative' space, having a clear hierarchy of members<sup>1</sup> and funded by various organisations. Its programme seeks to establish relationships between Greek and foreign artists. Their aim is the creation of a wider network, which they consider achievable through the organisation of a defined number of exhibitions per year. At the same time, they organise lectures and seminars and provide counseling to students and young artists. On the other hand, the [Bangladesh](#) project space is based more on the friendship and trust between three people and their common interest in performance. The space is self-funded, which ensures absolute freedom in pursuing its programme.<sup>2</sup>

1 Founder and director, gallery manager, 2-4 interns

2 'Generally in the beginning our intention was not to have too busy a programme... not to rush to fill it, but to include what we really wanted (meaning working on our own project and those of our friends above all else)... The costs were shared by the three of us (but whoever had a show at the time contributed more.)' (Source: communication with Vasilis Noulas)

The [Green Park](#) space and [C&C](#) (abbreviation of the project space name, [Circuits and Currents](#)) fall somewhere in between the above-mentioned cases. [Green Park](#), being a collective, aims to pursue a number of fields through an educational, experimental, collective and political programme. Unlike other spaces, its activities extend from organising lectures, to concerts and parties, in all of which financial support of the space is encouraged.

In order to understand the specific structure of this space, one should have in mind the emergence of this initiative: it is housed in an abandoned cafeteria, [Green Park](#), which belongs to the municipality of Athens and whose function is radically re-defined by the team members. Because of the large number of individuals involved, team members are often divided into smaller groups for functional and practical reasons.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of structure and organisation, the [C&C](#) model has similarities with those of [Green Park](#). Nevertheless, its hybrid character makes it one of the most controversial and remarkable cases of the period. The project space of the Athens School of Fine Arts, [Circuits and Currents](#) was founded in 2014 through the [Survival Kit](#) project, one of the most successful funding programmes of the [German Academic Exchange Service \(DAAD\)](#).<sup>4</sup>

Establishing a space of this kind was considered a necessary part of the educational process developed by the two universities. The decision to establish it in Athens during the 'crisis era' was not accidental. The lack of a similar space in Greece contributed to the rapid growth and broad recognition of [C&C](#), with positive but also negative effects. The coordinators' initial aim was for the students<sup>5</sup> from both the Fine Art and Theoretical departments of the university to organise and curate the programme of hosted events. Their vision for this space, in their own words, was to: *Host exhibitions, talks and workshops, bringing together artists, theoreticians and people from other fields.*<sup>6</sup>

The activity of this project space was extremely diverse. While examining its digital archive, one notices the evolution and finally the consolidation of [C&C](#) as one of the most 'attractive' spaces in the Athenian art scene. Starting as an alternative and self-organised space, the first events negotiated issues such as collectivity, self-organisation and alternative education. At the time, there was clear influence by the [Transmission Gallery](#)<sup>7</sup> Glasgow, which was recommended to the participating students as a model of structure

3 'This action proposes a fluid manner of organisation. It seeks to remain imperfect and incomplete; to collectively explore production models, the relationship with the public and the dominant narratives; to redefine the request of lightness, of self-sarcasm, criticism and joy.' (Source: communication with Vasilis Noulas)

4 Part of the programme: 'Cooperation with Greek higher education institutions 2014-2016'

5 Total 15 members, 3 student assistants, 5 committee members, 2 coordinators

6 <http://circuitsandcurrents.info/>

7 Transmission was set up in 1983 by Glasgow School of Art graduates who were dissatisfied with the lack of exhibition spaces and opportunities for young artists in Glasgow. Through sponsorship and support from the Scottish Arts Council (now Creative Scotland) they managed and maintained a space in which to exhibit their work and the work of a rapidly growing collective of local artists. (Source: <http://circuitsandcurrents.info/>)



and function by the coordinators. In order to promote a similar operating model, a workshop by members of the organising committee, John Nicol, Jennifer Bailey and Nick Thomas, on operating models for collective and self-organised art spaces was given.

Student response was positive, and the idea of collectivity<sup>8</sup> was applied successfully in the first months of the space's operation. The need for hierarchy in such spaces, however, led to establishing a committee and three paid student assistant positions. This, together with growing public awareness of the space, led to an overflow of external proposals that undermined the collective group.<sup>9</sup> Pressure to produce a continuous, rich programme<sup>10</sup> led to accepting various proposals<sup>11</sup> that often contradicted the members' original intentions.<sup>12</sup> DAAD's academic background and institutional weight were a determining factor in students' decisions, who subconsciously felt the need to meet the requirements of the funding. The team's changed attitude was intensified by the intense<sup>13</sup> and intrusive<sup>14</sup> involvement<sup>15</sup> of the Athens School of Fine Arts,<sup>16</sup> as well as the subsequent announcement for the organisation of documenta 14 in Athens. Moreover, this decision during a period of social, economic and political turmoil attracted a large part of the European art scene, including educational institutions, in the city centre.<sup>17</sup>

- 8 'Guys, the doodle has been ready for a few days now. Me and [redacted] even though we have our final degree exams we have signed up for two days already. Other people who have a degree have also signed up. There are many days, and it won't be possible otherwise... Setting up is starting on Friday, and no one has signed up yet. (on Wednesday evening) Who is going to open the door, and with what keys? The person in charge of the project space can't always take all the burden by himself.' (Source: communication between C&C members)
- 9 'Those who partied last night must put back [redacted]'s speakers the way they were before the show opened on Thursday and tidy up in the kitchen. There were things to be taken on loan on the desk. We could not find them, and had to call 15 people to locate cables and mikes. If you don't know where everything should be placed, at least leave it on the desk.' (Source: communication between C&C members)
- 10 'It's almost March and there is NO lecture and workshop programme ready yet... If you expect the committee to do all the work, then you are wrong...' (Source: communication between C&C members)
- 11 'The usb for the media player on the ground floor was missing, so we couldn't play (the very popular) video with Chihuahua puppies set on Lady Gaga's 'Paparazzi'.' (Source: communication between C&C members)
- 12 'This was completely disrespectful on their side. Guys, you cannot imagine how the space stinks! It's like someone died in there. Plus, there is ketchup or red paint on the curtain, the table was used by this guy in a really disgusting way. And they also took our plastic water tube and also made a mess of it. I believe we should ask him to come at the space and clean properly this time, we are not anyone's maids.' (Source: communication between C&C members)
- 13 'What is all this bullshit? An email explaining that in this space there is no way to have people paying for anything! Her manners were unacceptable, and I wish for her to get haemorrhoids! We must reply that we do not do paid events, that we will check our schedule and respond soon. Meanwhile, think of an event to add to fill up those dates. I love you xxx. I already miss youu.' (Source: communication between C&C members)
- 14 '—I realise that there is no time. On the other hand, it had been promised that this seminar would take place at C & C.—'How was that promised to you? By whom? Since we never gave a positive response, and the programme is filled every day until the end of July.' (Source: communication between members of C&C on external proposals)
- 15 'We would like to inform you that on 15–20 March and 11–13 April 2016 we will be needing the Project Space (13 Notara St.) to host seminars. So please plan space activities accordingly.' (Source: communication between C&C members on external proposals)
- 16 'I have just spoken with ASFA's Career Office and on Thursday the British Council workshop is going to occupy the ground floor until approx. 18:00. That means that we can have our meeting either at 18:30 or at 19:00.' (Source: communication between C&C members)
- 17 'We are fascinated by the wealth of projects and art that has developed out of the current politics. Would you perhaps have time to meet up and show us a bit around Exarchia? We are especially interested in young artists and Street Art that can be seen in Exarchia. The question we would like to ask you is whether it is possible to arrange a meeting between the 26th of May and the 2nd of June in your space, or even think of a project we could do together over a longer period. On Wednesday 29th in the afternoon we would like to meet with some of the alternative learning experiments active in the city and have an open discussion on this issue.' (Source: communication between C&C members)

As inevitably happens in collective and autonomous spaces,<sup>18</sup> the team members compromised with a managerial role, perpetuating the illusion of collectivity and self-organisation. Furthermore, its hybrid nature, which is a result of the conflict between academic institutions and alternative educational practices, negatively influenced the development of the space. C&C was the result of cooperation by three different institutions, DAAD, AdbK and ASFA. This intermediate state prevented the autonomy of the space, yet at the same time it offered it the prestige that no other venue had at that time.

Although the institutional 'umbrella' under which it operated often restricted the independence of C&C, it was necessary for its establishment and operation. As suggested by Andrea Fraser, the institution is not only a problem, but also a solution.<sup>19</sup> In any case, the project space C&C has been one of the most positive educational ventures of the period. Its initiative filled important gaps in education and largely determined student evolution, constituting an alternative to ASFA's institutionalisation. Among other things, it created a network between the new generation of artists, whose effects are visible even today. Moreover, funding administration and distribution is a positive exception to 'professional volunteers',<sup>20</sup> a trend already emerging at the time. C&C must always be examined in the broader context of the educational programme which developed it. It is in this relationship that the essence of C&C lies—not in that venue's ambitions of independence and autonomy. If this relationship had been emphasised more, the team might have been spared some of the problems mentioned above.

- 18 'Externally, Group Material's first public year was an encouraging success. But internally, problems advanced. The maintenance and operation of the storefront was becoming a ball-and-chain on the collective. More and more our energies were swallowed by the space, the space, the space. Repairs, new installations, gallery sitting, hysterically paced curating, fundraising, and personal disputes cut into our very limited time as a creative group who had to work full-time jobs during the day or night. People got broke, frustrated, and very tired. People quit. As Group Material closed its first season, we knew we could not continue on this course. Everything had to change. The mistake was obvious. Just like the alternative spaces we had set out to criticize, here we were sitting on 13th Street waiting for everyone to rush down and see our shows instead of us taking the initiative of mobilizing into public areas. We had to cease being a space and start becoming a working group once again...' (Source: Group Material, 'Caution! Alternative Space', 1982)
- 19 Gerald Raunig, Gene Ray, Art and Contemporary Critical Practice: Reinventing Institutional Critique, 200
- 20 'We seek talented individuals that combine creativity, imaginative flair, technical knowledge and, most of all, team spirit, to contribute to the preparation of the Athens Biennale 2015–2017 [redacted]. We wish to offer you the opportunity to develop your interests and know-how through tasks that you will undertake in relation to the needs of an international event of contemporary art. You will collaborate with the curatorial team and participants of the exhibition, communicate and exchange opinions with art professionals, and contribute to create an engaging experience for the Athens Biennale 2015–2017.' (Source: <http://athensbiennale.org/en/opportunities/>)
- 'The times when Deutsche Bank funded the first exhibition are now past, and the Biennale begins from zero each time. The organisation of the [redacted] in 2011, which was mounted almost exclusively by volunteer work is now legendary.' (Source: [http://www.athinorama.gr/events/article/mpienale\\_athinas\\_enas\\_thesmos\\_under\\_construction-2508067.html](http://www.athinorama.gr/events/article/mpienale_athinas_enas_thesmos_under_construction-2508067.html))
- 'The Cycladic Museum volunteers welcome you to the Ai Weiwei exhibition at the Museum. They discuss the art works with you, reply to your questions and guide you in the exhibition. We would like to thank all the volunteers for their contribution to the exhibition.' (Source: <http://aiweiwei.cycladic.gr/%CE%B5%CE%B8%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%BD%CE%84%CE%AD%CF%82/>)
- 'Volunteers are an integral part of Athens Digital Arts Festival. Every year, plenty of young and creative people give us a hand in all sectors of the festival, from welcoming the audience, helping at installing artworks to guided tours, contributing to an integrated experience for the festival guests. Through your participation, you will have the opportunity to work with the whole team, activating your interests and discovering your skills. If you are over 18 and you want to contribute through your creativity and your energetic presence at the 11th Athens Digital Arts Festival, please click below and fill out the form. At the end of the festival, all volunteers will receive a certificate of participation.' (Source: <http://www.adaf.gr/call-for-volunteers-2/?lang=el>)



Unfortunately, the fate of such groups is often, though not always, doomed. As recent history indicates, collective and self-organised spaces have a short lifespan. With few exceptions, the problems of such spaces are almost always the same: the ultimate shifting away from the original identity, the inability to develop an effective and meaningful programme, the intrusive involvement of various institutions in conjunction with a large number of members lead to the same end result. Though surviving much longer thanks to its special status, *Circuits and Currents* also came to face these issues.

Despite its problems and malfunctions, C&C was a very popular venue. Despite its problems and malfunctions, C & C was a very popular venue. Yet, in retrospect, its hybridity, the vision upon which it was established and the involvement of so many different bodies, are all sources of confusion with regard to how to approach it. They raise a number of questions.

Having the benefit of hindsight, how do we regard this initiative?

As a student artists' group?<sup>21</sup>

As part of an educational arts programme?<sup>22</sup>

As an extension of a larger academic institution?<sup>23</sup>

As an alternative arts venue?<sup>24</sup>

As an art gallery space?<sup>25</sup>

- 
- 21 Circuits On Air: Ongoing radio project between Athens and Munich, <http://circuitsandcurrents.info/circuits-on-air/>, <https://www.mixcloud.com/circuits-currents/>, Current Room, The Naturalization Challenge, Doctor Against Bach (Source: <http://circuitsandcurrents.info/>)
- 22 'How to Project and Spell' is a portmanteau film, colliding documentary, dramatic and experimental approaches. It is the result of an ongoing collaboration between students from the Athens School of Fine Art and the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Munich. Developed from shared research, workshops and discussions, this filmic experiment captures the mood of the present moment as experienced and reflected by its authors. 'Reality Through Fiction' is the result of a collective conversation on how we conceive, perform and construct the real through continuous recourse to the fictional. Having Circuits and Currents as a starting point, the exhibition will extend along Tositsa Street and the vicinity. It will also extend to virtual spaces online, live performances and radio broadcasts. (Source: <http://circuitsandcurrents.info/>)
- 23 'Hi, we, art students from Kassel (Germany), are in Athens since yesterday. A few weeks ago we had a visit to your university. We received the offer to use the room Circuits&Currents. Is it possible for us to use the room tomorrow (We could pick up the keys)?' (Source: communication between C&C members on external proposals)
- 24 'Good afternoon, We are a family with children and elderly persons who live in one of the flats that share the same courtyard with your space. In recent weeks, loud and disturbing noises come out of your workshop even late at night. We would like to ask you to limit them. We are very happy to have you near us and appreciate your enthusiasm, but please show consideration for your neighbours. Perhaps you should consider acoustic isolation. A first step is shutting the windows facing the courtyard. Your neighbours.'
- 'Through the artist collaboration parallel network Circuits and Currents, whose tributes range from Banksy to May 1 labour events, the Athens School of Fine Arts reveals its global perspective.' (Source: [redacted], [redacted])
- 25 'I contacted the insurance company and they are asking for 'risk mitigation measures'. Could you please let me know what is already in place so I can inform them? I remember that there are iron bars on the windows, but am not sure what else there is (alarm, safety locks, etc.).' (Source: (Source: communication between C&C members on external proposals))
- Dear [redacted], [redacted], [redacted] and [redacted],
- PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO GUARDING THE EXHIBITION
- PLEASE SIGN UP FOR THE DATES YOU CAN...
- <http://doodle.com/poll/gbb8kifxwgegbkfa> (Source: communication between C&C members)
- 'I am submitting here the proposal for an exhibition to be scheduled for spring, possibly May 2016. As you can see, artist participation is still pending; I could meet up with you to discuss details. Please get in touch if you need more info.'
- (Source: communication between C&C members on external proposals)
- '[redacted] needs someone to open the space at 14:30 at the latest and deal with some issues that have arisen. She normally does not deserve that, but will ask anyway, and [redacted] will let her know if someone is available.'
- (Source: communication between C&C members on external project proposals)

# PROWLING AROUND





Thinking  
Thinking

About the thin King

Talking  
Talking

About the tall King

Lack of pizza trips me into space

Choosing the bubble  
Using the bubble  
Loosing the bubble

No thought where to get but  
Want to be there  
Made it somehow but

I'm still lost in the streets

While body stays,  
Mind is prowling around

Thin King becomes tall King  
Becomes orot—  
und?

Wonder where it died  
While prowling through the night

Trying to find

...  
.  
.

When I realized that I am the protagonist in the  
dreams of a dog  
I decided to make the best out of it.



# NOTARA has bread<sup>1</sup>

GRAU IST DIE GESELLSCHAFT UND SCHÖN BIST DU.

Graffiti at 38, Notara Street

To go from my house on 54 Dervenion Street to my boyfriend's house on 56 Notara Street, I pass by Exarchia Square, down Stournari Street and right into the first street after Spyrou Trikoupi Street. This little street is Notara Street, starting from Stournari Street and ending on Alexandras Avenue, across from the Pedion tou Areos Park. Number 54 is on the last block of the street, just before the avenue. So, to get to Kostas' house, I must walk the entire length of Notara Street.

On the ground floor of number 3, there is the shop Repair 24. Repairs—Maintenance—Networks—Graphics—Cards—Printing—Scanners. The young man who works there, a curly-haired Arab, is very nice. Whenever a problem arises with my laptop (which happens often), he's the man to go to. It's an Acer, which I'm typing on at this very moment, in Word. I bought it from a store on Stournari Street, now closed—many stores on Stournari Street have closed. I remember Papasotiriou Bookstores, across from the National Technical University, where I browsed art books and even nicked a few when I got a chance. My Word software was installed by a friend; it is not original, and when I open it, there is a warning message from Microsoft.

On the opposite wall, number six, is written 'WHOEVER FUCKS YOU IS AEK'<sup>2</sup>. Someone has crossed out with a red line the words 'IS AEK' and modified the graffiti to read: 'WHOEVER FUCKS YOU—IS OLYMPIAKOS'<sup>3</sup>. I never fail to be shocked by the macho tone of this graffiti. I then wonder how I can still be shocked by such things.

On the ground floor of number 13 is Circuits and Currents (the sign is in English). This space, with the enigmatic, trendy name is explained by the subtitle (always in English): Project Space of the Athens School of Fine Arts. The exhibition What is the Other, curated by Evangelia Ledaki is on now. We had a small creative-writing workshop there one afternoon

<sup>1</sup> In Greek slang it means 'Notara Street is where the action is'

<sup>2</sup> AEK (The Constantinople Athletic Union): One of the most popular Greek football teams

<sup>3</sup> Gavros (slang): A fan of Olympiacos, the most popular Greek football team

with the publication which I am writing for at this moment in view. And I'm writing it for a fee, too—something very rare for Greece under the current circumstances. This is owed to the fact that the programme is sponsored by a German institution. Whatever money one can find today to support cultural, particularly visual-art, events come from German institutions. Some Greek ones too such as NEON. Hopefully, the Onassis Foundation's interest in the visual arts will continue to grow.

Number 15 on the ground floor hosts the Hash Art Theatre venue. Recently, there was a production of Chekhov's *The Seagull*. The company did a DIY promotion campaign in Exarchia. You can still see phrases written on the pavements and walls, like: 'SEAGULL. That is what I meant to say.' The accents over the words have been replaced by a stylised rendering of a seagull—tildes-birds. The play was performed this winter; I did not go to watch it, although the venue was on my daily route on Notara Street. Proximity and comfort sometimes act as a disincentive. The banal play selection also acted as a deterrent. Besides, I didn't go to see the exhibition What is the Other, mounted at Circuits and Currents, either. And it looks like I won't be going at all, even though I pass every day. Not to mention that it may be over by now.

At number 28 is a garage. The old signs still survive on the pillars and beams. *ENTER SLOWLY. NO USE OF FIRE.*

Across from it, on the ground floor of number 27 is Iamblichus Publishers. Once upon a time I read—and it is still on my bookshelf—Gareth Knight's study *Magicians and Alchemists*. The Tradition of the West is also published by them. I have always been drawn to occultism, yet not completely—realism always prevails, never fully, though. A Syrian of Arab origin, Iamblichus was a neo-Platonic philosopher of late Antiquity. Wikipedia states that, 'Iamblichus lived in turbulent times, a period of great change, during which a cultural cycle ended and a new one began.'

At number 26, there is a six-storey building that has been occupied and now functions as a 'refugee/immigrant housing shelter'. Often, in the late afternoon, Arab youths and children play in the street, or simply stand on the sidewalk in groups and chat. As the light becomes more horizontal and it gradually gets dark, Notara Street seems to slip away from the here and now into past times, other places. Quite the opposite is actually the case: Notara Street is in tune with the times. Yesterday morning, passing by the occupied building with Kostas, a strong smell of faeces hit our nostrils. We looked through the glass window. Boys, absorbed in their mobile screens, women wearing headscarves, bundles of clothes, half-naked children here and there. Everything looked normal, everyone seemed indifferent to the persistent stink. A sewage pipe must have broken. We went on our way.

At number 38, a notice was posted on the building entrance: 'Strictly forbidden to strangers, no leaflet distributors, no entrance to people unrelated to the building. The police will be notified in case of trespassing.' As I stood on the pavement, copying the notice to my notepad, I noticed a middle-aged man watching me with alarm from behind the glazed door. He opened the door and went out on to the landing. We silently looked into each other's eyes for an instant. Then he made a point of locking the building door and left. It was broad



daylight. I felt bad about all this. Yet, I could have started a conversation with him. I could have alleviated his suspicion. But I didn't.

Number 46 houses ONIRO HOTEL. Oniro means 'dream' in Greek. Now abandoned, its entrances sealed off, its nice, large, vertical sign in a black font against a yellow background, reminiscent of Western films. Once, some 20 years ago, with an occasional partner, we had rented a room with a double bed for a few hours at a time. I remember that we had entered from the other side of the building, on Trikoupi Street. I had met with this guy two or three times. Always in a different hotel. On the plate that blocks the entrance to ONIRO HOTEL someone wrote the acronyms *EAM*<sup>4</sup>/*ELAS*<sup>5</sup>/*OPLA*<sup>6</sup>/*DSE*<sup>7</sup>/ one below the other, followed by the hammer and sickle.

Number 56 is where my boyfriend lives, in the third-floor flat. He pays €300 a month to rent a four-room, 100-square-metre flat. A veritable bargain. On the fourth floor lives a young man who plays the piano all day long. On the fifth floor lives the actress Sophia Philippidou with her partner, the painter Kostas Fotopoulos. This is a rather arty building. This time last year, we staged the performance *Stillness* in Kostas's flat. It featured Vicky Kyriakoulakou, as well as the two of us. The show took place in the living room and the terrace, starting late in the afternoon, and the sunset could be seen through the window, beyond the blocks of flats on Patission Street.

We also invited Sophia and Kostas from the fifth floor to attend. At the end of the performance, in front of the elevator entrance, Sophia told me in her characteristic lisp: 'Well done! Just what our building needs!'

Having acquired momentum after the first cycle of performances in June last year, we went on to organise an art show in the flat an art show, titled *Where There is Smoke, There is Fire*. It was an elaboration on the themes of the performance, and featured works by the three of us. How ephemeral does it all seem—exhibitions, performances, graffiti and buildings! Somewhere a fire lights up, then quickly turns to smoke, and the smoke dissolves into the air even more quickly. Another fire, further away, turns into smoke, and another, and another, and smoke signals go up into the air every now and then, casually dissolving above the city skyline.

Kostas has just made delicious lentils with zucchini and carrots, and we have a plate each, with feta cheese and bread I got from the bakery on the corner of Metsovou and Trikoupi streets. From the terrace, one can see across, the beautiful neo-classical building on the

corner of Notara Street and Alexandras Avenue, designed by the architect Ernst Ziller and owned by the Republic of Austria. It used to house the Austrian Archaeological Institute. Along the fence, someone wrote '*The poor vote for NO*'. Someone has added in red paint '*DON'T*'. '*The poor DON'T vote for NO*'. We just found out on the internet that the right-wing candidate narrowly failed to be elected in Austria after all.

'Yet, not only Notara Street, but also Dervenion is action-packed!', I told Kostas while eating and chatting about this text that I must write.

'And what is the action on Dervenion Street?', he asked cheekily.

'First of all we, too, have an occupied building housing refugees, on at number 56, just next door to the building where I live. Then, on the corner with Themistokleous Street there is the famous, almost historical by now, Intriga Bar. Not to mention Barbayiannis's old taverna.'

'The truth is that we have all been part of the action at Barbayiannis's!', admitted Kostas.

'And there was a performance in a flat on Dervenion, too,' I continued triumphantly: 'Ectoplasms, three years ago, in my flat.'

'Yes, but you do not have Circuits and Currents on Dervenion!' he silenced me.

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4 The National Liberation Front (EAM) was the main movement of the Greek Resistance during the Axis occupation of Greece during World War II. Its main driving force was Communist Party of Greece (KKE).

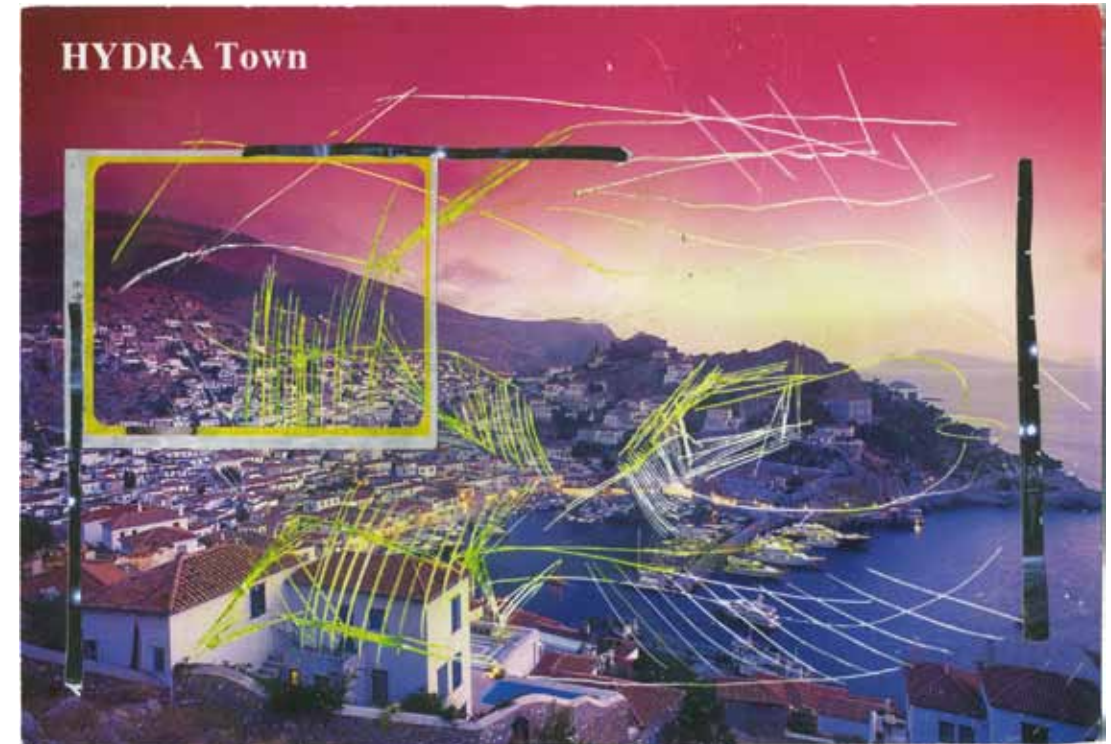
5 The Greek People's Liberation Army (ELAS) was the military arm of the left-wing National Liberation Front (EAM) during the period of the Greek Resistance until February 1945, then during the Greek Civil War.

6 The Organization for the Protection of the People's Struggle (OPLA, an acronym meaning 'weapons' in Greek) was a special division of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) during the Axis Occupation of Greece in World War II and during the first years of the Civil War. It can be described as a paramilitary security force.

7 The Democratic Army of Greece (DSE) was the army founded by the Communist Party of Greece during the Greek Civil War, 1946–1949. At its height, it had a strength of around 50,000 men and women.













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1 ✌️❄️👉👈💀💧

keep it together  
do it.  
I liked the dancing  
up going.  
Down  
dow  
do  
d  
da  
da da  
la la la  
bla bla  
bla!

---

6 No balanced body

I stumble up the stairs  
I stumble in a room  
I stumble when I mumble  
I crumble when I stumble



---

4  
Night. Swimmers.  
Washing off the sweat of losing  
it turns  
around us  
in circles  
around the head

---

7     daily anything appears differently

the sea  
calms their eyes  
oppresses the depression  
outside of this world

the blue sky  
opens up for some thoughts  
knowing its just a layer  
between them and the universe



# What is Guru?

##Urdu ##Greek ##English ##Translation ##Interview



I met Supna at Omonia.

A mutual friend introduced us and I became interested in her dancing.

We agreed to do a video together, Supna's dancing and a small interview.

Later, I also asked her to do a performance presenting her dancing at "Green Park".

Here follow parts of an interview with her.

Is "Supna" your real name? No, only in Greece people call me Supna, in Pakistan, they used to call me "Chenda Chenda".

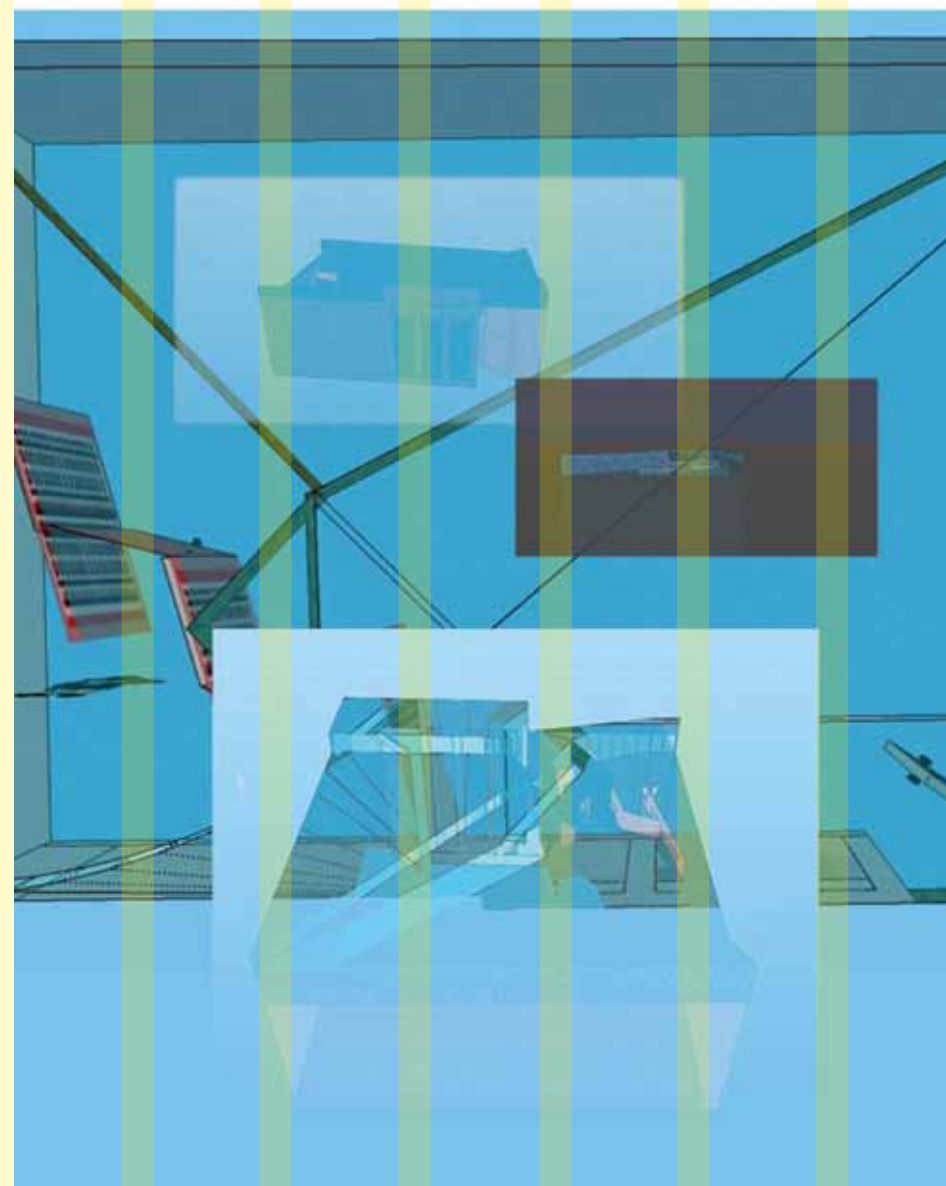
What does "Supna" mean? "Supna" means "Dream". How many "hijras" are in Athens nowadays? ("Hijra", is a term used in South Asia referring to trans women. Many "hijras" live in well-defined and organized all-hijra communities, led by a guru. These communities have sustained themselves over generations by "adopting" young boys who are rejected by, or flee their family of origin. Many work as sex workers for survival)<sup>1</sup>. Maybe 3, some others are just gays. In the group at which I am guru and we are working together, one is a peddler, the other is nursing an old man, and the other one is a cleaning lady. Generally, they are doing 2–3 jobs in order to survive. I never did a job other than dancing. In Pakistan I was dancing too. When I first came to Greece I worked at a street market, but I couldn't live without dancing. What about the other "hijras"? Two left for Italy, but most of them have left for Germany. Three people who were working as dancers left for Munich, I think. They used to sleep at my place. They didn't even know in which city they were, because they didn't know themselves at all. Do you know of other "hijras" outside Athens, maybe in other cities? Those trans who are living in the countryside stay there and don't come to Athens, they have made friends over there, with whom they stay together. There is one guy in Halkida and another one in some other town. We talk on the phone... Those who are living in villages don't wear women's clothes. Some dress as women in secret, because they have relatives or other known people. Six or seven of the people who live here in Athens, dressed in women's clothes when we went to parties to dance. They can not wear women's clothes all of the time, because they are afraid of being treated badly in the houses where they work. Why did you leave Pakistan? When I was 15 years old, I fled home and went to live with trans hijras women. I have been dancing ever since. Hermaphrodite people in Pakistan don't have any pride or honour. In the eyes of other Pakistanis, we are very bad people. Even if we were hanging around with my brother, they said I was with a boyfriend. They do not respect us and sometimes do bad and violent things to us. We are afraid that people would kill us—I have seen a murder of a hijra right in front of me. We can't have any ambitions there either. When we were young we used to go to other villages, secretly begging and dancing at wedding parties, bazaars, at people's joys and sorrows. This is how we earned money for living. From dawn to dusk we were begging in the streets so that we would have something to eat on the next day. On our way back, we went to the police station to thank them and dance for them, but policemen raped us and treated us badly. They took away all of our money. Since then, we were hiding from them, we were warned and moved to other cities, to Quetta, Karachi and elsewhere. We were hiding there to save our lives, so that police would not find us and take us to doctors to have us operated, to have sex reassignment. There are a lot of problems in Pakistan. For 20–25 years, I danced for living. I was carrying all the burden of my brothers and sisters, I sustained them with my work, I managed to feed them and have them married. I gave them everything I had. But even in Karachi, where I had relatives, I could not show my real face, that I was doing this job and get raped all the time. If only they learnt about it, they wouldn't talk to us or even look at us. They do not accept us. Once, I was hanging around Omonia, some Pakistanis came and asked me why I was wearing women's clothes and started harassing me. If I had been in

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hijra\\_\(South\\_Asia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hijra_(South_Asia))



Pakistan, they would have been able to hit me or do whatever they wanted to me. But here, I went to the police and were detained for two hours... *Do you have any hijra-friend in Pakistan that you still have communication with?* We still are in contact with 3 hijra of the house we were living. Mostly, with two of them. They tell me “Don’t come back, here we live without respect and honor”. They tell me how lucky I was that I left Pakistan. These girls (hijras) are now begging around houses. They also dance at weddings and child births. *Do your friends have sex reassignment surgery?* Yes, they had a surgery. I couldn’t. I tried it twice but I was very afraid. When I saw the medical tools I left quickly. My friends were brave enough to do this surgery. But I feel lucky that I didn’t have a surgery otherwise I would still be there in the house of hijras in Pakistan. *Do your friends (hijras) also dance at festivals in Pakistan?* Not anymore, because now bomb blasts occur in Festivals. *Do you have any trans or hermaphrodite friends in Greece, apart from the Pakistani ones?* Yes, I have two in Omonia. I have a vey good friend from Sri Lanka. I only have one Greek friend and we meet each other in Omonia. This Greek girl has done a sex reassignment surgery. She looks just like a real woman. *Do you like hanging around Omonia Square?* Yes, I like coming here in Omonia, because there are many friends around here to hang around with. I cannot stay at home alone. I have no other friends than people at Omonia and, if anyone wants to accept my greeting, he is welcome. *Where do you live?* Now I live in Kypseli and I come to Omonia on foot, because I have no money to buy bus ticket and no job, so time passes by so slowly and I get bored at home. Here in Omonia, I may find a job. I am hanging around with Pakistanis because I don’t speak Greek. That’s why I socialize only with Pakistani people. *Do you work?* No, I am unemployed. There are not many jobs for dancers at weddings and festivals, here. Lately, I just did the two performances with you, Evi. I would like to dance at a big show in front of many people. This is my dream. I would also like to dance 2–3 times a week in order to earn money and survive. Before my collaboration with you, I had never worked with a Greek before. I used to travel to Corinth or Thebes, to dance at Pakistani wedding or engagement parties. *Did people enjoy your dance at ‘Green Park’?* It was my first time dancing in public, in Greece. I thought nobody would be interested in it, but the audience really liked it. They also gave me money, one gave me 10 euros, another 5 euros, another finally... 30. I earned 100 euros! But I also gave money to the student that helps me prepare myself. There was a big crowd. Most of the people were foreigners (from Germany and France) and Greeks. There were only few Pakistanis. It was very nice, that’s why I wanted a video of the performance. *How long does it take you to get yourself prepared for the performance?* I do make up, hair combing and try clothes for about 2–3 hours. If you want to make a right performance, you have to be a professional. *How do you feel about your work?* I am a Pakistani hermaphrodite and I am doing this job because I want to do it. Nobody obligates me to do this job. I also give this interview because I want to do it. Here, I don’t have any relatives or no one to harass or insult me. There, even unknown people threw stones on me. Whether dead or alive, there is no life for me. I was just crying all of the time. Life really sucks there. They may even force you to have sex reassignment. But once you are operated, you can not return home, because nobody shows you any respect anymore. You will spend your whole life as a trans and you have to leave your town or village and go to Karachi or other big cities...

# Palimpsest<sup>1</sup>





History forms loops, saving and overwriting data that often present small differences between them, only to reassure us of our unique, non-circular existence. When entering the art cloister these historical similarities grow ever thicker. Within the art world similar experiments for similar hypotheses present themselves with great frequency. The similarities I find relevant at this point deal with the relations and dynamics created within groups that concern themselves with artistic projects.

Issues around collectivity and art collectives have been much commented on in the art world, with collaborative projects perhaps culminating in the 1960s when many artists aligned themselves with some of the most important social reforms of modernity. The feminist movement is considered a milestone in the history of collaborative projects since women used consciousness raising sessions in order to raise political and social awareness, discuss their position and rights in society, and finally claim their rights as artists in the contemporary art scene.

A similar need for collaboration has re-emerged today, in circumstances that demand social convulsion. Same pursuit, different variables. Collaboration in the new '10s appears as the alternative solution to capitalist practices, expected to stabilise economic oppression and other downsides of the current economic system concerning human rights. Aiming to the creation of a common collective conscience, collaborative methods pursue practices and methods that are not motivated by economic profit.

So the sequence of historically looping elements is as follows: in times of oppression people develop the natural need to create a pact with others with whom they identify in order to form communities where they can develop their skills, find mutual support and ultimately avoid the situation that makes them non-productive. Collectives are supposed to nurture dynamics based on the feeling of trust. Trust is supposed to form an invisible 'collective body' where, although individuality is not incriminated for giving the 'body' its special multiplicity, the sense of totality comes first.

The common political orientation of a collective is supposed to be its cohesive and formative power but also its goal. The aspirations of a collaborative art project can be divided into two categories: the first relates to artistic production which state both practical and theoretical progress. The second relates to the structure that each collective chooses to use and how faithful it can remain to its not-so-abstract ideal. This means: how does the collective treat its own members?

Power has been stigmatised as a problematic word by orthodox Marxists who use it to describe the repressive mechanisms applied by the State. For Althusser power is only the State's top-down control over the social pyramid. In a fictional scenario, Althusser inspects the function of a randomly picked collaborative art group and offers his opinion. He says that the flow is gone and, because capitalism has doomed us to eternal rivalry and avarice, we will never be able to get over this socially constructed need to, individually, prevail. The only way to save ourselves is to revolt and take over the means of production. While noble, perhaps this is outdated.

Foucault on the other hand suggests that power is a network of relations, traversing every aspect of everyday life. In Foucauldian thought, power is not only an oppressive, one-way, governmental force but also a regulative mechanism that keeps society from unraveling into chaos. Institutions produce general politics, and general politics produce general truths. General truths are the ones that determine the predictable and, thus, acceptable norms of behaviour.

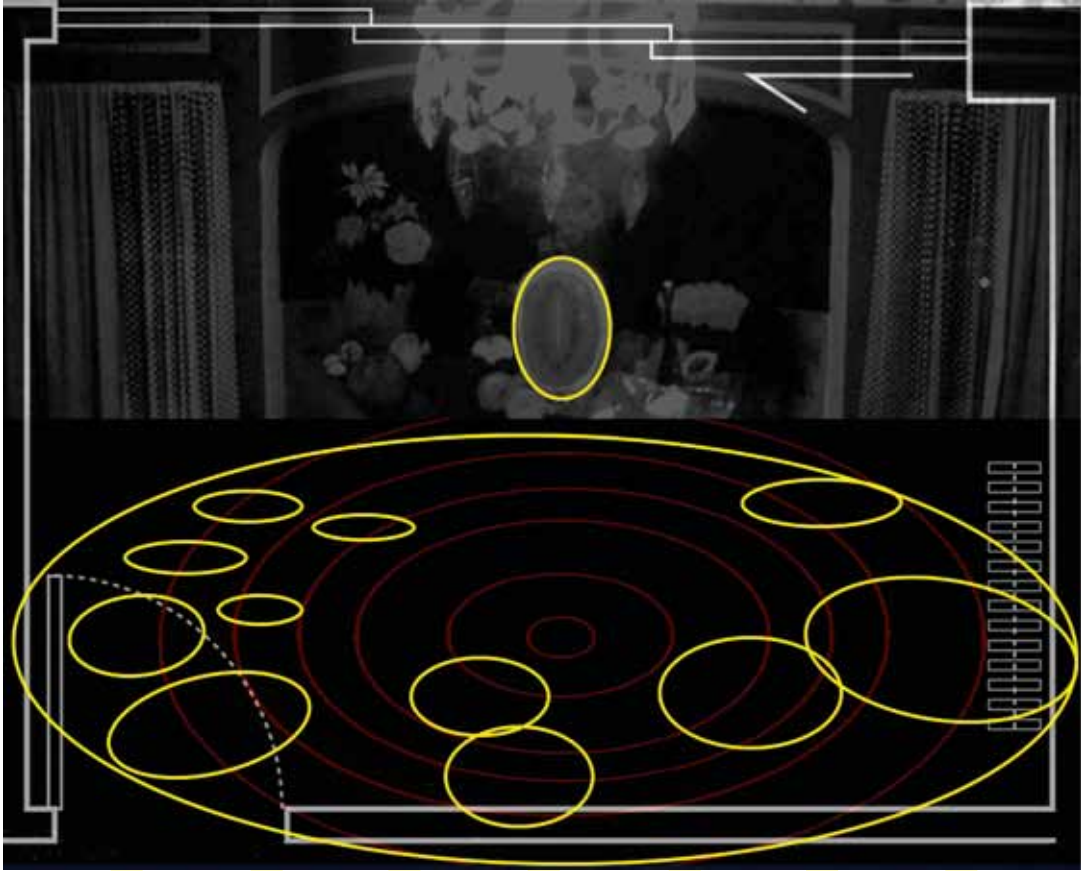
But since these norms seem to be reproducing conservative models affecting many aspects of our lives, Foucault also discusses the essential attachment of the notion of resistance to the notion of power. These two concepts seem to form an inseparable duet that functions under the law of action/reaction. When power pulls the strings, so does resistance.

Back to the fictional scenario: this time Foucault inspects the same collaborative art group as Althusser did earlier. After criticising all internal interactions, he says that nonetheless, the dynamics created present a normal outcome of human interaction in a world breeding inequality. He suggests to its members to start thinking about the productive and counterproductive relations caused by this intrinsic tendency. Finally he says, 'There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations'<sup>2</sup>. But also: 'Where there is power, there is resistance'<sup>3</sup>.

#### Bibliography

- 1 (a) a manuscript, typically of papyrus or parchment, that has been written on more than once, with the earlier writing incompletely scraped off or erased and often legible.(b) an object or area that has extensive evidence of layers showing activity or use.
- 2 Michel Foucault, "Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of the Prison", London, Penguin, 1991
- 3 Michel Foucault, "History of sexuality, 1st Volume: The will for Knowledge", 2011, Athens, Plethron







TO BET  
 ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●  
 THE LIGHTS BLINK SO  
 BRIGHT HOLDING US  
 SPELLBOUND AND BLIND.  
 WE CAN'T LOOK AWAY  
 WHEN WE TRY THE SOUND  
 WAVES US BACK.  
 ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

I won't start this story with 'this morning' but with 'later this morning'. I went to work. The job I had to do was really simple, just carrying big pieces of wood from one place to another. Luckily some guy gave me gloves when we took a break so the fucking splinters had no chance of getting under my skin any more —you can't imagine the pain they cause. But I didn't cry because I knew exactly why I was doing this. Me and my crew we wanted to go to the casino.

Standing in front of the mirror I'm already realising my outfit doesn't fit as well as I'd imagined. The black shirt hangs over the trousers to hide the fact that the belt is broken and that the trousers are just old jeans. With an open jacket it kind of works. A slim Markus Lanz tie could at least superficially get me into the company of the type of people who like that sort of thing.

My ears hurt. The clunky rhinestone earrings are super heavy. When I imagine that real diamonds must be way heavier than plastic, I start feeling sorry for all the people who own diamond earrings.

With a suit and shirt there's less need to stand upright on your own. It holds you in shape. You get used to the posture after a while, it might even change the way you see the world. The upright posture, imposed by society's straightjacket, is maintained —simply out of mistrust or respect for the seams—and with time, especially with routine, it starts feeling good to confuse the upright stance supported by the corset of convention with the upright stance created by feeling good in your body. Probably because the skeleton-orientated design supports the body shape, and allows you to feel more self-assured and stable.

In front of the swing door it says **SPIELBANK** in Arial. There's no one around except us. The man at the desk stares through the glass divider. Swing door—blocked off. A laminated piece of paper, A4: **PRESS THE BLUE BUTTON.** Blue arrow, blue button, a buzzing noise, the side door opens. A guy wearing stripy socks and sandals.

A tree in the shape of a cube—decorated with small Christmassy lights. Evergreen—no, plastic. A fountain—out of order.

J gives me two small bottles of vodka. I put them in my bag. As I stand in front of the counter, I realize that bringing two bottles of alcohol in my bag might not be such a good idea. Passport check: they don't look back and forth between your face and your passport as often as the usual controls but still they register you.

After putting my belt and electronic devices into a plastic tray, the full-body scan awaits me. I see M in front of me, holding up his arms as he's told, and almost losing his trousers in the process. Together we follow the signs and ride the escalators. Once we arrive at the broad glass divider, we slurp coffee from paper cups and watch planes taking off and landing.

●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●  
 \***EXPECTATION**  
 A pre-moment in time that orients me, foreshadows my mood, I control—I am controlled. Euphoria paired with aversion. Pre-thinking, pre-seeing, preparing—leads me and leads me away at the same

time. Feeling euphoric seems difficult in general. Euphoria takes up so much space in my head that I end up being bored. It's exactly what I don't want anymore.

●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

A red carpet explains the whole floor at the top. It makes walking easy. I'm more drawn to the aesthetics of the room, the velvet, the mahogany tables.

Everybody knows that the state condemns gambling and yet it takes all the profits. When you think that every casino in Germany is state-owned, and how much income they must generate, it feels very odd to see the anti-gambling campaigns that try to keep you away from this world, warning you of its dangers.

All those colourful coins flying through the air, sliding across the table. All this makes me forget my work, my dirty fingernails, my self-confidence.

●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●● Almost everyone has come here alone tonight. Not you, you are here with people.

In a group you become a different body. This body is fragile, it always falls apart and gets new weird body parts in addition. Illnesses tumours,



all of this is part of that body. Does individual profit grow out of this body? And if it does, what is the relation between the leftover body parts and the parts that succeed?

Between the rounds talking helps. A man on the balcony tells us he's been playing for 30 years and yet warns us about the dangers of gambling. Another smoker tells us he put a bet on the decision of the British people tonight.

.....  
\***FEELING EXITED** uncontrollably, I am present in a different form, no more but also no less—so I am here. Collective excitement, a collective state of being that could also just be my imagination—but it is there for me, for a short time I am calmed.  
.....

I stand on the sidelines. Things are only semi-committal here. In my left pocket I feel a handful of plastic discs. The few rules keep me at a distance. The staff maintain eye contact.

At first I don't dare bet on anything, but after a while I realize there's nothing else to do.

When I throw the jetons I feel like a pro, but I'm just pretending. The others even throw their jetons on the table. No one sees you are ruined. I never give tips.

The bosses and croupiers seem very comfortable. Footstools and all. The chair cushion is flipped before a new cashier sits down.

I'm surprised at how many of them are there. One at the front, two or three around the coincidence generator, another at the gallery, surveilling everything. A well-oiled machine. It's all running to plan. As confirmed by the empty look cast down from the control chair.

The ball is thrown. Centrifugal force pulls it outwards, rattling against the lacquered border, until it hops over the dividers, bounces twice, and rolls into the middle.

.....  
**IN EUROPEAN ROULETTE A SINGLE NUMBER WINS  $\frac{1}{37}$  AND LOSES  $\frac{36}{37}$ :**  
 **$-1 \times \frac{36}{37} + 35 \times \frac{1}{37} = -0.0270$**   
**(2.70% HOUSE EDGE)**  
.....

The 100 Euro chip is a beautiful colour. Purple. Hmm, why not green

like the 100 Euro banknote? I can't say why but somehow purple and the number 100 do not fit together in my mind. Why is the guy with the 100s winning all the time? I have only won once in 20 minutes of play. Winning two Euros.

A woman, smiling discreetly, invites me to choose from a row of numbers. I pick 22 and walk down a long corridor with two locked doors at the end. Firmly, I turn the door handle of the door on the left. Passing from one table to next to increase my luck. You think this is how it goes, that it's supposed to be lucky.

You just never know where the ball will land—there's no rule for that.

You're breaking all the rules but winning all the coins. In the future you will have lost. But not if you make the right decisions now.

The croupiers collect the chips with metal grafters. I wonder whether this movement can cause tennis elbow. A chain of causation is imposed on things after the event, always with a slight delay. Just like the board above the roulette table that shows the numbers of the past to help speculation about the future.

There is a green pocket numbered 0 (zero). Bet on one number —high risk, high reward.  
Bet on four numbers —risk less, win less.  
Bet on six numbers —less, less.  
Red or Black —Zero.

We have long since ceased to colonise only the leap of the last ball. The little screenwriter throws the stories into the future beforehand, in the form of photographs. Everyday life with all its possible images is transcribed in advance using the most natural-looking, winning images of everyday life, and pulled tight.

.....  
**POKER ON FRIDAYS, SATURDAYS, AND SUNDAYS ONLY.**  
.....

After burning one card the dealer puts three cards, face down, in the middle of the table. Then he burns another card, then puts down one more, burns one and puts down one more. Every player wants the winning combination. The two cards in the player's hand and three more on the table will form a combination. Hopefully better than the other players' hands.



Then—every player’s dream. Royal flush. Five cards of the same colour and all in a row. Ace, king, queen, jack, ten. Nobody could have a better hand. Your heart beats faster, every hair on your arm vibrates; this is it, the one hand you can’t lose, you shouldn’t raise too much too soon. You look at their faces, no one’s moving a muscle, their eyes are focused on a spot on your face—somewhere beneath your nose—don’t let it show.

Now: bet.  
Bet a bit more,  
never too much,  
just enough to lure them in.  
Although you know you need to see them. But there is only the smile and you feel naked, bare, all your secrets revealed, your hand out in the open.  
The smile knows.  
The smile has the king.  
The smile has nothing, this is a bluff, trying to shake you. You are almost certain you can’t lose.

Almost.  
All in. It’s done.  
No turning back.

• • • • •  
**5.2 PERCENT OF GAM-  
BLERS SPEND AN AVERAGE  
OF 100 EUROS ON GAM-  
BLING, 91 PERCENT SPEND**

**LESS THAN 50 EUROS.**  
• • • • •

Apparently everyone is scared of losing MONEY. This elusive, mostly digital equivalent of worth. Worth your time, worth your while, worth your money.

I sneak to the bar. The Cosmo is tasty but makes me feel dizzy. I look at L. He has a gin and tonic. ‘I hate the feeling of being followed, the feeling of being watched,’ I say. —‘Find a wormhole!’ he replies. I stare at the marble counter. My head aches. Thinking of the crack, the cut, the feeling of dividuality.

I always thought the casino had nothing to do with the outside world, that it would deliberately stay in a different space-time continuum. The relation to reality seems to be ranked as no longer dangerous.

I’m shaking hands with my new friend, the machine. He lets me down over and over again. He promises to be a better friend. I believe him for another 10 Euros.

I throw the chip, the colours fade. First you have the problem, which may be an attack, then you have a trick. I’m here right now! My body

moves like a metronome in time with the watch on my wrist. Like the cigarette machine, the gambling makes me lose. An interior, a movement, a shift, a suck. The ship starts its journey through time and space. It’s the day that Alice Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders guided us to our chairs. It’s the time after a lifetime ended and a sparkle flowed through my head and heart as we covered the Prevelaki Hall in green velvet. We have so many different times in our spines. We drink raki from crystal skulls as the glitter guides us to an utopia where control, money, fear, debt and pressure fade. We are the most beautiful idiots. The narrative of the evening calms the body. The sound of the gambling machine rings in my head. The money is gone without a visible wound.

• • • • •  
**GAME OVER.**  
• • • • •

I pissed myself laughing against a wall while laughing in a corner of society.

In the shared sense of security of losing against the state, you are more preoccupied with your involvement in the money game for financial rather than moral reasons, rather

than giving any serious thought to rules and strategies. The money has headed back to its own. One of the ‘free’ giveaways, matches, the casino souvenir, catches fire in your hand, breaking apart as it burns and falls to the parquet floor at home.

We arrive at the car park where we put the car a few hours ago. It’s still there. There are no other cars on the asphalt lawn. I am lying in the trunk of the car, loud music in my ears. When I return from the bushes, two guys are sitting on the open boot, laughing and shouting. Their feet fly over the asphalt as the car draws a circle. Rien ne va plus.

The address I have in mind turns out to be wrong, so we walk the last part. I have not been here for a long time, I find orientation difficult. We try several houses before the remote control on the keyring opens a wide gate. I don’t touch anything, I go straight to the bedroom, pull back the bedspread, and lie down—no sheets. The ceiling lamp reminds me of the cylinder on the table.

It starts to rotate.

• • • • •







# *S - KIT EPISODE II*

## RTF Conference

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— BY CIVEL MOMO

An infinite conference room that is reminiscent of so many eras and movie sets. Reality through Fiction was promising as a conference in 2015. And it was, it really was...

We gambled thoughts together with a famous writer talking about gambling and drawing lines from the models of early cybernetics to an analysis of the situation now: a society that is very slow and barely moves anymore, because it constantly produces mathematical fictions of the future, which prevent a real future from coming into being.

The examples from art that are more open to an unknown and non-human controlled future made me wonder: how controllable do I feel and am I constantly in control when I gamble, when it comes to terms of production in my mind? Am I so selfish that I projected this thought into my perspective and practice rather than following the initial thought of projecting it onto every individual of this world? Entering this plane, one question was making infinite circles in my mind: is this reality or is this fiction? Still I was not the only one...

The gambling man had an effect on many of the people attending the RtF conference.

The night after the conference I had a dream... and, romantic cabbage head that I am, I wrote a poem about it. It went like this:



### Under the Midnight Sun

I think I know how it feels to die happy.  
Amazingly light, with a lilac aura.  
Lilac I get and I am becoming lucky.  
Delighted fearless in a divine plethora.

Conjunction phrases, in an exotic jungle.

Wandering free amongst the animals.  
In an arena made for storm I rumble.  
Melting under the strength of cannibals.  
In the exotic jungle, I rumble.  
Gamble my only everything.  
My everything believes it has to stumble.  
Everything is explicitly sober and beautifully humble.  
I mumble words under a tree.  
The tree is not to be described.  
Where life is meant to beautify justice.  
In a place where we cannot be so easily bribed.

To thrive in a world that's made for just us.  
Who came to win?  
Who came to hide?  
I only know how it feels when you die happy.  
I came undead so many times.  
I only consider my self ultra lucky, when I hear wind chimes.

I close the cellar door,  
I declare nuclear war.  
I come undone, under a midnight sun.

You prove me wrong  
You long for rebellious lust.  
Grazer dust. Gravy waves.  
Dreamless graves and a soulless toy for tyrant's lust.  
In an exotic dream I hear my conscience grumble.  
In a silver concrete jungle,  
Running endlessly free,  
having endless pure fun.

Beside a river I am cooking Gumbo,  
under the light of the midnight sun.

The conference room was exquisitely decorated by a true survivor called JG. The fabrics used were sprayed with body deodorants to smell better, the plants were sprayed with water and jasmine extracts to keep them fresh and the '70s smell of the chairs and the ashtrays once used by wealthy bastards were strikingly evident in the room.

The electronic cigarettes that were not used for smoking but for writing and for laser pointing were found in every ashtray on the small tables in the conference hall. The exhibition was running parallel to the conference and our heads were not really empty enough to absorb all of the information coming from the speakers. At least mine wasn't...

Am I being selfish again? I felt like an electronic cigarette that can't be used for smoking.

#Sub-functioning #conference\_hall.





And at this point I decided that my writing skills were kind of  
rusty so I turned to my poetic voice for once again.  
So it went like this:

**In a conference room I saw a pair of blue eyes.  
And the ice in my whiskey sour,  
was reflecting back my own black eyes.**

**And this infinite stare,  
gazed my existence,  
caught in gambling  
and with much persistence  
I started focusing on words.**

**Behind the olive curtains,  
words of refracting were echoing on their surface.  
They were coming out from the mouths  
of the speakers,  
and they kept being echoed as if they  
were preachers.  
Words of fictional reality or real fiction  
were defying every diction.**

**In a conference hall I saw dim lights,  
and in this low-lit environment,  
I envied the strength of the words used for disguise.**

**A beamer, a microphone and a remote  
the gambling and the fiction  
don't create a second globe,  
but instead shift our relation to this world.**

**We are living within a catastrophe.  
A discontinuation within ourselves.**

**Behind the curtains how the brain  
creates reality through fiction.**

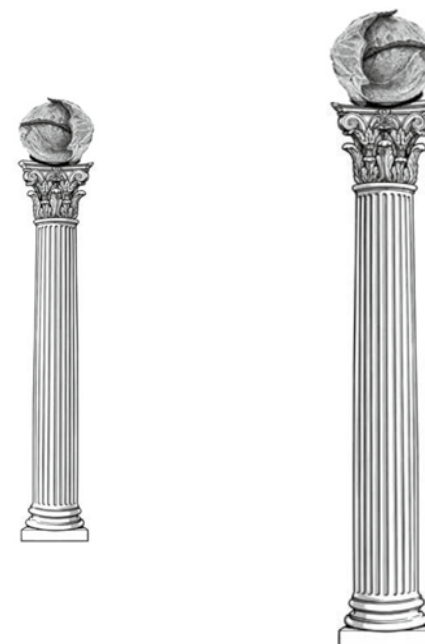
**How the words become rain,  
rain that is destined for prediction.  
In a conference hall,  
behind a wooden wall.**

**The silver linings and the curtain drape,  
Defeat, misery, despair, poverty,  
and shame.**

**Resistance.**

**Fiction enables us to sense worldliness  
and can even change  
our understanding of the world.**

**Behind the curtains and behind the brain...  
reality throws fiction dismayingly in the rain.**









# How

---

This is a description of a memory, a description of a situation, in which a number of short videos made in different group constellations were screened for the first time. The description is a kind of zooming in and out: never getting close enough to all the images that were projected onto a bedsheet in front of a wooden wall in a small hut in mid-October; shifting the attention to the room itself, where people were sitting on chairs, on the floor, on tables, on the window sill, turning the dining room into a temporary cinema; and then widening the frame even more, to the panoramic view in front of the window, onto the meadows and the mountains that surrounded us. There is excitement and tension. Everyone wants everyone else to see what they've done, and everyone is nervous, because everyone both longs for and fears feedback. It is a rare situation of having time, of finding oneself and one another in an unlikely place, and in between one working stage and the next. Many things had already been done, proposals written and then changed over the course of filming and editing. The process of bringing these various sketches together into one timeline is scheduled for the week after. In between, we are together and we talk, either looking at moving images or non-moving mountains. We cook, sleep, eat, walk, and have an enormous birthday party that changes something, overnight.

*HOW TO PROJECT AND SPELL* IS THE FINAL TITLE OF THE FILM THAT, AFTER NEGOTIATING MANY EXPECTATIONS, ALTERATIONS AND DISAGREEMENTS, IS FINALLY MADE. IT BECOMES A PORTMANTEAU FILM, WHERE ONE EPISODE FOLLOWS, AND SOMETIMES MERGES INTO, THE NEXT. AND YET, 'SPELLING' DOES NOT ONLY MEAN TO SPEAK THE LETTERS OF A WORD IN SEQUENCE, BUT ALSO REFERS TO THE ACT OF CASTING A SPELL ON SOMEONE OR SOMETHING, AS A CURSE OR BLESSING.

PERHAPS THERE IS INDEED SOME MAGIC GOING ON IN THE MAKING OF CONVERSATIONS AND IMAGES, IN THE SENSE OF LOSING CONTROL, OR SENSING THAT THINGS HAPPEN BY THEMSELVES, OR OF NOT KNOWING EXACTLY WHICH FORCES ARE AT PLAY.

Submitting oneself to the miracle of and within film-making might be a way to regain some agency within this uncanny uncertainty and in proposing one possible perspective on it. Tender risks in a product-fetishising commodified world. This may be personal, but also relates to a multi-layered political and economic crisis that is often represented by images that resemble each other, although they come from unique contexts and specific conditions.

Projected onto the improvised screen in the hut are different takes on reality. The camera (which seems to have become this easy instrument that can follow you everywhere) finds its way into a number of houses where people live, to remote places where the characters make an attempt to feel at home and to public areas that provide a stage for performances of post-dwelling. A paternoster lift passes the frame and releases the viewer onto different levels. A mysterious and haunting machine, a circuit of ascent and descent, linked to the administrative power of the 20th century, puts people into an (in)voluntary voyage. We see waiting passengers, empty corridors, digital ornaments, ancient stairs, abandoned premises, private rooms, apocalyptic creatures. It's an *Alice in Wonderland* kind of magic: you are entering doors without knowing whether you are invited or intruding, even when permission is granted and everyone has been paid for, even when the figures you encounter in the film have themselves a fantastical look. Several films use the metaphor of an enigmatic monster, be it glittering, bearded or long-armed. This might be a way to work out poetically the ever-present between-Us Otherness: 'never to be found merely over there and outside of oneself, for it is always over here, between Us' (Trinh T. Minh-ha). What is the difference between art and bread? After all, the multiple cameras caught the images of people. Thus, at this



first viewing—the overall structure is still missing and each video is unfolding in its own length and atmosphere—we are discussing how a person in front of the camera inevitably turns into a character, how to take responsibility for this transformation in editing, and what it means to fictionalise the document, or to perform theory. It is difficult. But the mountains help. They offer fresh air and some metaphors, of paths and peaks and detours, and in this case even a real chair-lift that brings you to the top almost without walking.

Back in the city, some of us want to extend and hold onto this mode of non-productive attentiveness. For two more days we share the luxurious situation of watching films, dozing and talking about them, calling this gathering *The Camera People—The Camera I*. Being in wildly divergent moods, the kind of frontal relationships that we're forced into day in, day out, start to disperse and we drift away from the isolating imperatives of lost identification and absolute attention demanded of us by the traditional edicts of artistic engagement (as Irit Rogoff speaks of with a prudential voice in 'WE: Collectivities, Mutualities, Participations'). Producing meanings, negotiating meanings, unmaking meanings in a collective process. We are talking about how to work with our instruments, what kind of inter-relations we are setting up between the camera and the filmed object/subject/person/thing/process. Do you consider the camera as a person or as an animal? Which relationship do you establish and negotiate with the filmed ones? We are watching *A Short Video About Tate Modern* by Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa (UK, 2004/2005, 4,5'), which reflects the looked-at-ness back into the room, unrelieved. And Babette Mangolte's *The Camera: Je/La Camera: I* (USA, 1977, 88') which explores the power relations inherent in the process of portrait photography.

In a later comment Eva Weinmayr suggests a small excerpt from *Arena TV-series* (BBC) shot in summer 1985, in which writer Jean Genet causes the dispositive of the interview situation to collapse: he speaks about his dream of a revolt of the camera people, the technicians, the sound-man. He sits bent on a chair, playing with the cigarette packet paper of his Gitanes bleues. 'Does it interest you to break the order in this room?', asks the interviewer. 'I am all on my own here and in front of me are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 people. Of course I want to break the order.' Genet compares that situation with being interrogated by the police. The camera turns and we see the technicians, in their awkward routine. Now Genet sits upright, full of a subtle angry energy: 'And there is a margin, where I am...

where I am marginalised.' He speaks about joining the mainstream and therefore being angry with himself, for having accepted coming to this place. This interview took place during the period Genet was working on his last book, *Prisoner Of Love* (1986)—a book above-quoted writer/filmmaker Trinh T. Minh-ha thoroughly refers to in her 1996 essay, 'An Acoustic Journey', which develops and rethinks questions of border and refuge, and the totalising dynamics of border logistics.

Watching *Chronique d'été / Chronicle of a Summer* by Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin (France, 1961, 85') in the small cinema space of Lothringer13\_Florida in Munich after eating bread and cheese... A work of testimony in the age of decolonisation. Starting from the simple question, 'Are you happy?' in this blindsiding street-interview style, playing through various interview modes like confessions, staged conversations, and talking with groups and individuals, about being alone and about the labour conditions of French workers, a multi-directionality of memory is established. In the last part of the film the participants and interviewees reflect on the film, on the idea of truth and staging. A film lived by women and men who have given a few moments of their lives to a new experiment in *cinéma vérité*, as Rouch says in the beginning of the film.

HOW DO WE LIVE NOW?

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# Go thru

*Things seen in movies: The cop or journalist in his dedicated search for justice, his wife has left him because he is just too goddamn committed to his job. His job is the repair and the maintenance of the truth and the light. To do this job, he has to go down into the deep underworld like a janitor into a cellar and test his goodness against the badness of bad men.*

*The goodness of the good men and the badness of the bad men is transcendental and not immediately evident through action thought or word, it's all in how the eyes narrow or widen in contemplation of the paedophile or murderer, a generation ago of the homosexual, further back and not of the fugitive slave, etc. This enemy Odysseus lives in a bad apartment because there is no woman to help him. He could get a servant but wives are better than servants because when you have sex you see the face of your father intoning the words I LOVE YOU SON. Men are helpless and will die alone or kill. Lol stupid movie.*

*Nevertheless the romance of the takeout container, romance of the whiskey bottle, romance of the ex-wife, do their work of efficient seduction. I know from this scripture how to perform the rites of love and the empty hand returning. I forget that sex doesn't need cutlery, remember in relief: O, only the immediate hands. Everyone congratulates each other on a job well done.*

*Because of the good man's dedication, the bad man is caught. The good man is dedicated to the bad man, he thinks of him always. The alibi of this dedication is: he must ignore his wife to fend off a possible threat to her. What do women want? Don't they know that life is threadbare and in excess of circumstance? The white children are protected and the white wives are saved to wife again another day, repeated actions of the hand and the heart. Everyone seems more machine when you look closely but animated by a warm and animal light. Reproductive capacities secured. Border secured. Everyone congratulates each other on a job well done.*

*You were brought up on this shit, pushed to the margins or beyond the margins of the plot, or maybe you were at the shining centre, who knows what the word 'you' will come to mean when it arrives in the mystery head. Brought up on this shit and supposedly classier shit just like it: 'read this, it hates you,' 'no I don't want to read what hates me', 'read it or you won't be smart,' 'I want to be smart because I think that will protect me,' 'you are too smart now and no arms fit around your thoughts, without the solace of solace you will grow bigger and spikier until it occurs to you to take this image of your hugeness back to its source.' You cannot go around you must go through.*

*What do the detectives and the journalists know about the search for truth, the search through the toxic waste dump for truth, the rat-like search in community or solitude through the decayed packaging and discarded food bits of this world this world this world for the truth that only the rats uphold in their trash search for it?*

*The cop or journalist isolated by his quest. The explorer, colonizer or traveler isolated by misfortune. There are movies now about men alone in space, men alone on islands, men alone on boats. Is this a new cheap method of making a movie? At the end everyone congratulates each other on a job well done.*



*In the movie the face of a white man of middle age contorts in what looks like grief and sorrow. The grief and sorrow has been outsourced to everyone else while the middle aged white man just twitches and winces in thrall to his numb inside. This is perfection. The music and the camerawork elicit my sympathy without giving any particular reason for it.*

*In a movie a friend turns to me and says, is the political task to identify agents or processes? For a minute I enjoy the clear distinction before I feel it unravel again. Something must actualise a process. The body with its distinguishing marks, its pretexts, is the hardware that runs the software, the software is violence, or violence is the hardware that produces the software of the body, or the software is relationship, is the social. Money with its lack of distinguishing marks, its pretexts, is the language in which all the wares are written. In the movie there are no analogies everyone is too serious, they have rendered reality trivial.*

*Where should I begin if not with this transparency says Glissant and ends there too. In this Chinese hair, my opacity, still covered in the glass of my skin and the no-more-truthful organs... I know I am only a minor character but I burst into the love scene with a gun in each hand; the couple freeze halfway through their first kiss. Me, from the wells of my eyes, to my reflection in the mirror:*

*I must start the process of becoming-mirror all alone; fear of becoming nothing, zerophobia, fear of a black planet shackled to its white moon. I am a minor character, my life is not mine, it belongs to the executive producers. I find myself unimportant, my nakedness is not indispensable to the plot and no one uses that excuse any more, obsolete now that plot has been superseded by nakedness. Is this plot indispensable to the sexually explicit scenes that it comes like John the Baptist to prepare? I ask you like a child to please find me important, do your own work of import and export you say, and the producer calls me and says I am not playing well with test audiences, could I speak slower, could I be more single-origin like a good coffee, could I lose a little weight?*

*Problem solving. This is not my job. This is no one's job or a collective one. But you keep trying.*

*Listen, the demands are simple, we have to abolish cops, prisons, husbands and landlords, the demands are impossible. More is being asked of us historically than solo introspection or even introspection in twos and threes, more even is being asked of us than irony. We are being asked but by no one to become class traitors—art is the R&D wing of the bourgeoisie—or to render ourselves gratefully historically irrelevant. We are being asked to get ready, get ready, be ready already.*

*Coming up from the gay beach and thru the poor neighborhood to catch the train, the men rocking back and forth on the pavement, catch the eye and throw it away. A couple is counting dollars outside the shop, I only need 2 dollars for Alleve he says and we can spend 6 dollars on you. She seems angry or just sad. They have 8 dollars. The very big difference between counting singles and not having to count. The very big difference between zero and one. Don't move your head or the camera can't track you and turn you into an animal, all you've ever wanted to be, unnatural desire to be natural. Nature is whatever resists thought, whatever turns thought into a machine. Everyone there carries the heavy weight of poverty, there is no reason, class war.*

*I walk through with careful steps wondering which side do I look like I'm on which side do I want to look like I'm on. I will report back later in richer rooms. Recognition is not magic. Later in the airport afraid of being counted as zero and not one I forget to withhold my thank you from the agent of the border. Go through go through. They offer the blunter edge of their protection. Fear is shameful but what isn't, given the right light and a wrong day. This world is a mirage and only the distinction between world and not-world is real. In faith, in grateful tran-sit, I put the little exhaustions of words together however they choose to lie down.*



# VILLAINS

Anafi, July 2016

To all the random people who will read this random publication.  
The poets will not be explained on the ground.

Snowy snowy whity white, pommes de terre.  
I'm on a beach in some southeast side  
trying to write by getting offside.  
Calibri is my typography style,  
supposed to know but never zzzzzzstyle.  
Ztop. Starover. Startover.  
Rave or Rest.  
Stereo rar.  
Star reo and so forth.

The villain in every story: the villain at the top of every emblem.  
Let's admit: the villain creates the story, the villain sets the start;  
no matter how hard.  
Snow White would have never gone through so many adventures  
without the witch.  
Her life would be peaceful and boring as she is.

Let's go to our story:

**W**e don't have a concrete villain, just a villa,  
a human being and the bad itself.  
Just because we are not in a fairytale and nothing is set in symbols.  
But think about it: would we need a so called 'survival-kit'  
if everything was perfectly functioning in our bureaucracy of Arts?  
Greece in Cry.  
Pose Art. Tear your eye.  
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!  
The answer is No!

Let's s thank our dearest villain/School/Terrestrials in Crisis  
or whatever it is.  
I give a shot,  
I am a sizzling pot.  
We would have never met the dwarfs.  
But thank you little story-key that you let us live and that we met them.  
Hello Circuits, little hut in the woods, how can I ever come out of you again?  
We have work to stay here. We have to do all the housework but it's fine.  
The travel through the housework let us wait at the door hinge  
and starts with us the search for Rainbow, Halo and QR.  
At least no quick response.  
At least we have a place to stay and some people around us.

**' A witch & some freedom please ! '**

She comes and puts little trips again.  
Wow!  
The spicy part: transformation of the villain into the something:  
could it be dirt in the space?  
Etcetera? The incomprehensions? The whateverisms?

Thanks for the listening comprehension, little sensibilities!

I don't know who they are for you.  
I don't know who they are for themselves.  
I don't know who they are for whatever.  
I have no specific answer today.



Nevermind, whatever happens, I will forget and get that:  
Beauty is coming and death is awake.  
One with vendetta one with respect.  
The beauty stays. Forever.

Stop.  
Stop again!  
Find yourself during instructions!  
I haven't found itself yet and I am not sure that it needs to be found.

Narcosis.  
Mix the stories.  
The apple trick worked.  
I am dead again.  
I am out of time. Time in my life, every now and then I'm falling apart.  
Sunday is future.  
And I am out of theme, there is a theme, kids, I am sinking into lies.  
That's nothing to me.

Thank you villains for keeping us alive.  
Really thanks, bye

**Note: Anafi is a tiny island in the middle of nowhere and I am  
there fortunately dead.**

✂✂



**K** In our work of the last decade we have both gravitated towards formulating an understanding of crisis that does not passively register as a periodic feature of capitalist normalcy, but rather as the starting point of an expanding intensification. Seeking out historical homologues and exemplary individuations, we have both attempted to de-sensationalise the notion of crisis and move towards material expressions for its factual normalcy within modern capitalism. But while in Fordism and Post-Fordism crisis was a form of narration, ideologically marked by a (sudden) onset, a dramatic climax and an (improved system reboot) end; within the current period of financialised capitalism, crisis is perpetually dramatised. So the crisis, which has been proclaimed since 2008, by now no longer appears as just another periodic and inherently systemic phenomenon of brutalist capitalist 'progress'. Instead the idea of progress seems to have vanished as this crisis has institutionalised itself as a series of climaxes which appear not only in what is defined as the economic and political sectors of society, but has also spread into and mutated all spheres of human and non-human life. The contained modern temporality, within which crisis was but one returning technology of human life under capitalism, seems to disintegrate as crisis spreads, multiplies, intensifies and institutionalises itself. One of capitalism's central features, the idea of perpetual progress—illustrated in the historical spiral of crisis, breakthrough and prosperity—seems to have turned from catalyst to cataclysm, from spiral to circle. Yet, capitalism is nowhere near vanishing from the face of the earth. How then are we to narrate our desires for exiting a situation in which the forms of narration through which we have been identifying ourselves have to themselves re-materialise in a different order?

**A** Lately there's been a noticeable drift from the use of the word 'crisis' to the use of the word 'catastrophe' and a proliferation of catastrophic and apocalyptic scenarios in anything from popular culture to theory (ostensibly feeding of popular culture).<sup>1</sup> So what do we (the authors of this text) understand by 'crisis', 'catastrophe' and 'apocalypse'? And why is it so important to us to distinguish between these terms and point out their distinct, if overlapping, categories and dynamics?

<sup>1</sup> For example Sven Lütticken's recent writings on art in a state of catastrophe; Maurizio Lazzarato's expansion of the notion of crisis into one of catastrophe; The Invisible Committee's To Our Friends; Black Box: A Record of the Catastrophe, Volumes One and Two published with PM Press this year and conferences like Tanja Widmann and Barbara Reisinger's Post-Apocalyptic Self-Reflection which took place in Vienna earlier in 2016.



We have come to resist the term ‘*(financial) crisis*’ for what has occurred since 2008 mainly because it implies two (diametrically opposed) fallacies. The first serves the dominant discourse by obscuring the extent to which these developments were foreseeable, as well as the extent to which the ‘*management of the crisis*’ e.g. through so-called austerity measures, has itself intensified the downward economic trajectory, bringing no tangible economic recovery for the vast majority. The second originates with a reading of Marx, in which capitalism’s cyclical crisis will ultimately, dialectically work towards an overcoming of capitalism itself (the latest version of which would be [Paul Mason’s \*PostCapitalism\*](#)).<sup>2</sup>

Somewhere on the further end of this spectrum [Accelerationists](#)<sup>3</sup> argue that intensifying the self-destructive tendencies of capitalism will hasten its collapse and bring about radically new conditions. Critiquing these positions, [Benjamin Noys](#) refers to [Gopal Balakrishnan](#)’s, observation that ‘*the “acceleration” of capitalism since the 1970s, especially its technological developments of new cybernetic production forces, did not indicate some “exhilarating new cultural condition” but rather “[c]apitalism’s culture became an organized semblance of world historic dynamism concealing and counteracting a secular deceleration in “the real economy.”*’<sup>4</sup> and concludes that ‘*Accelerationism, as cultural and theoretical moment, is predicated on economic deceleration—there is a disjuncture, or even inversion, between the superstructure and the base.*’<sup>5</sup>

This is also where we find a whole array of apocalyptic and post-human scenarios entering the stage, which promise to shake up ossified humanist thought but often offer little more than planet-crashingly boring science-fiction fan-boy speculations about *the-world-without-us* ([Eugene Thacker](#))<sup>6</sup> instead.

It’s why I feel the need to distinguish these terms, justifying the decision to turn from one term to another, and not use them interchangeably (as e.g. Accelerationism does), probably also because I’m instinctively really against anything that has a reactionary, ‘*end of the world*’ death-wish flavour too it.

You have proposed we speak of the current moment in terms of catastrophe. Where might we go from there?

2 Paul Mason, *PostCapitalism: A Guide to Our Future*, Allan Lane, 2015.

3 The latest version of that being Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams’, *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a Work Without Work*, UK: Verso, 2015.

4 See for example <https://unfashionablylate.wordpress.com/2011/02/20/the-neverfuture>

5 See Benjamin Noys, ‘Apocalypse, Tendency, Crisis’, *Mute* <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/apocalypse-tendency-crisis>

6 Eugene Thacker’s most popular book in this regard would be *In the Dust of This Planet (Horror of Philosophy vol. 1)*, UK: Zero Books, 2011. This became the first of a series, the third volume of which is *Tentacles Longer Than Night (Horror of Philosophy vol. 3)* which came out in April 2015.

**K** I couldn’t agree more with your rejection of the current nihilism-chic. The Accelerationist tropes you mentioned make it pretty obvious where this kind of theory comes from: it is mostly borne out of academia, performing a seemingly infinite theoretical radicality that knows nothing of its consequences because it is by definition only a mind-game, entirely based on the stable subject position of its (male) authors. This is something which has always been appalling about radical chic in academia, but right now it also signifies a very acute theoretical problem because what these pseudo-goth writers propose is a fundamental ontology of negativity. Theirs is a negation of all life and thus is first and foremost misanthropic, or to use the more (academically) fashionable term: inhuman.

But, as writers such as [Donna Haraway](#), [Rosi Braidotti](#), [Katherine N. Hayles](#) or [Sadie Plant](#)<sup>7</sup> have demonstrated, there is an a-humanism that can describe an *epistemic* (instead of a fundamental) ontology of negativity and thus perceive our present as the catastrophe that it is, without opting for an eternal death-wish. Where the pseudo-radical gesture of fundamental negation would rather die than question its own categorical justification, the epistemic understanding of absolute negativity questions exactly the categorical justifications that our lives are based on as they become more and more impossible. They are thinking catastrophe not as that of the *other* but as that of the *self*. Thinking catastrophe is thus: not prolonging the logic of capitalist consequence, but attempting to materialise a thinking against ones own thinking,<sup>8</sup> a human life beyond the capitalist subject form – or in [Gilles Deleuze](#)’s and [Félix Guattari](#)’s words, desiring an exit, not freedom (micrological escape routes instead of macrological dictums).

In [Walter Benjamin](#)’s writing, and in a whole lineage of political thought since, the concept of catastrophe has thus signalled not so much the end of the world, but more the emergence of a lived, materialised temporality which emerges through the interruption of oppressive normalcy. [Benjamin](#)’s famous dictum that what is catastrophic is that the present reproduces itself, points in exactly that direction. [Walter Benjamin](#) in his eighth thesis [On the Concept of History](#), written in 1940, had argued, that ‘*the tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the state of emergency in which we live is not the exception but the rule*’ and that ‘*it is our task to bring about a real state of emergency*’<sup>9</sup> to enable a revolutionary ‘*leap into the open air*’.<sup>10</sup> So the reason why I would argue that the present is catastrophic is because it reproduces and expands a naturalised, a passivised state of emergency: the

7 Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, UK: Routledge, 1991. Donna Haraway, *Modest\_Witness@Second\_Millennium. FemaleMan\_Meets\_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*, UK: Routledge, 1997. Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming*, UK: Polity, 2002. Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman*, UK: Polity, 2013. Sadie Plant, *Zeroes and Ones: Digital Women and the New Technoculture*, USA: Doubleday, 1997.

8 Sabeth Buchmann looked at such a constellation in relation to artistic production during the late 1960s and early 1970s, in her *Denken gegen das Denken: Produktion, Technologie, Subjektivität bei Sol LeWitt, Yvonne Rainer und Helio Oiticia*, Germany: B\_books, 2007.

9 Walter Benjamin, ‘Über den Begriff der Geschichte’, Rolf Tiedemann (ed.), *Gesammelte Schriften I.2*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991, p.392.

10 Ibid. p.396.



present tense is non-reproducible, yet it reproduces itself. These are catastrophic times, because these are times which are taking themselves apart.

From another vantage point, this situation could be described as the replacement of the administrative difference and competition between the bourgeois (capitalist) and materialist (socialist) versions of north-western modernism by the violent opposition of belief systems that are inherently incommensurable with one another. This is not least owed to the fact that not only did the bourgeois side largely bank on an inherently imperialist understanding of modernity, but so did, in many ways, its materialist counter-part. Marxist Internationalism in its dominant versions did not engage much in a more transversal understanding of different global modernities or materialisms until the anti-colonial resistance movements of the 1960s. And, as [Chris Marker](#) demonstrates in his 1977 film *Le fond du l'air est rouge*, May 1968 in Europe and the US was in many ways a repercussion of the anti-colonial struggles preceding those events. But ultimately anti-colonialism obviously did not result in de-colonisation, but rather in an actualisation of colonising power. So, if we differentiate catastrophe from crisis also by a sense of temporality that is characterised as a perpetual state of disintegration, if 'catastrophe is', as [Sadie Plant](#) and [Nick Land](#) argued in 1994 'the past coming apart',<sup>11</sup> then one can argue that for large parts of the world modernity has meant a life in catastrophe to begin with. And, regrettably that means that while the capitalist past is falling apart, so is the Marxist past.

However, most northern anti-systemic movements which grew out of the struggles of the 1960s did not ultimately sustain their own de-colonisation, but lapsed back into that very disintegration of transversal politics and nationalised struggles that capitalist (and also state-socialist) modernity enforced. So retrospectively we might end up arguing that the opposition of capitalism versus socialism has to be fundamentally re-anchored with respect to their shared externalisations of historical catastrophisation. Socialism offered the more humane modern systemic form of reproduction—but it nevertheless also enforced an understanding of emancipation as rationalisation. And it is not least this rationalisation that has again and again presented itself not only as a medium of externalising catastrophe on a social level, but also as one of internalising it as individuals. It is this rationality which [Gilles Deleuze](#) and [Félix Guattari](#) dissect in their epic *Anti-Oedipus*<sup>12</sup> in which they rightfully assess that ultimately [Marx's](#) materialisation of human history did not go far enough. It materialised work as labour, but took for granted the juridical and psychological stability of the modern subject, its status as self-property. Thus it imported an idealist kernel, this modern subject, the human in its functionalised form, into its hopes for socialisation and thus turned the question of emancipation into an administrative measure, one of labour, instead of an existential one, one of life.

11 Sadie Plant and Nick Land, 'Cyberpositive', Matthew Fuller (ed.), *Unnatural: Techno-Theory for a Contaminated Culture*, Underground, 1994.

12 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1975.

**A** I want to bring us back to your initial question about the necessity for forms of narration that could articulate our desire for exiting this catastrophic present—and could go further where others have not gone far enough because of the context in which this exchange between us will appear and its investment in probing forms of narration.

I also bring this up because we have been wondering, and still are, if it is possible to reclaim narrations of horror and abjection as sites in which neither subject nor object are properly constituted and departing from which these may be radically reconfigured.

When examining writers such as [Kafka](#), [Dostoyevsky](#), [Celine](#) and [Sade](#) in *Powers of Horror – An Essay on Abjection*<sup>13</sup> [Kristeva](#) observed that [my emphasis]:

The one who tries to utter this 'not yet a place,' this no-grounds, can obviously only do so backwards, starting from an over-mastery of the linguistic and rhetorical code. But in the last analysis he refers to fear—a terrifying, abject referent. We encounter this discourse in our dreams, or when death brushes us by, depriving us of the assurance mechanical use of speech ordinarily gives us, the assurance of being ourselves, that is, untouchable, unchangeable, immortal. But the writer is permanently confronted with such a language. The writer is a phobic who succeeds in metaphorizing in order to keep from being frightened to death; instead he comes to life again in signs.

Is a fully mastered code deformed under the real conditions of horror, or does the writer [Kristeva](#) describes simulate the de-forming effect of (real and imagined) conditions on the text by drawing on his (still intact) mastery of the code—or should we rather speak of a convergence of both?

**K** I would say that it is a necessary convergence of both, no? While the simulation stages an analysis of the present that within itself claims consistency, this consistency itself is in a state of deformation. But this might be exactly why the idea of horror seems so very productive right now—because its form is the form of consequential deviation, it measures out the consequences of consequential forms of behaviour, of the social as a genuinely pathological state. And again, I would say that this distinguishes what you have argued in relation to horror from the fan-boy love of horror: the latter seeks out the sensationalism of extremities, the voyeuristic love of catastrophe, while what you are referring to is rather a consequential simulation that always finds itself gravitating back towards reality, because reality on the most banal level contains so much horror. So for me consequential horror signifies a narrative structure that today opens up a life form—rather than an infinite death—and again, with [Deleuze](#) and [Guattari](#), no freedom, but an exit.

13 Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, USA: Columbia University Press, 1982, p.38.



So this would be another, and aesthetic argument for characterising our present as a state of catastrophe. Crisis implies a standard deviation from normalcy—but I would, just as you do, refuse to accept the systemic brutalisms of our present as normalcy. Rather, it seems that modern time is out of joint, and that is because the rationalisation it has been based on cannot survive its own consequences.

So one way of seeking out exits would be by retrospectively estranging one's own pre-histories. If *'the past'* is *'coming apart'* we might as well seek out what is uncovered by its disintegration. If we look at contemporary theoretical de-borderings of European cultural history, like Erhard Schüttzel's proposition to fundamentally expand our notion of modernity towards its spatial as well as temporal minorisation,<sup>14</sup> or Siegfried Zielinski's development of what he calls *'variantology'*,<sup>15</sup> digging into deep time tracing back media inventions and their transversal cultural belonging, we find that here it is not least this normalised modern temporality itself whose construction becomes questionable. Not all culture turns towards horror, but ours surely does...

**A** I recently started reading Alexander Etkind's *Warped Mourning: Stories of the Undead in the Land of the Unburied*, in which he examines post-catastrophic culture in the context of the collapse of the Soviet Union. The introduction is remarkable so I will quote from it at length:

After the French Revolution, relatives of the guillotined victims used to gather regularly for Bals des victimes, or Victims' Balls. Women wore a red ribbon marking the point where the guillotine cut. They cut their hair to bare their necks, imitating the haircut given the victim by the executioner. Inviting the women to dance, men would jerk their head sharply downward in imitation of decapitation. Dancing and flirting, they manifested their mourning for their fathers and mothers in macabre details.

It is possible that the whole story of these Victims' Balls is a subsequent, nineteenth-century romantic legend. Many authors have repeated it, however, as I am doing now. Whether the French decadents of the postrevolutionary generation really gathered at Victims' Balls or not, they fantasized about doing so, passing these fantasies on through generations, all the way to us. These legendary balls provide a prototypical case of what I call mimetic mourning—a recurrent response to loss that entails a symbolic reenactment of that loss.

[...]

14 Erhard Schüttzel, *Die Moderne im Spiegel des Primitiven: Weltliteratur und Ethnologie 1870-1960*, Germany: Fink Wilhelm GmbH + Co.Kg, 2005.

15 See a complete documentation of all related publications, <http://variantology.com/?lang=en>

In contrast to some later concepts, such as Freud's repetition compulsion and the connected ideas of trauma and the posttraumatic, the stories of Victims' Balls presume that their participants operate in full consciousness of their individual losses and their collective mourning. Sharing experience is a source of pleasure, and this is why we retell such stories also with some residual pleasure.<sup>16</sup>

This shared pleasure (in the mere retelling!) really gets me and I think this is what turned me towards horror in the first place.

Directly following this passage Etkind introduces the *'Fifty-Year-Effect'*, and states that (in relation to literature) *'ffifty years, or two cultural generations, is how much is needed to make the work of mourning culturally productive.'*

How many years does it take right now? On the mass entertainment level I think it took until Cloverfield (2008) for 9/11-style skyscraper smashing to appear in popular culture, but that interval between event and its becoming commercially and culturally 'productive' is getting shorter every year. All the popular horrific TV series of late (like *Breaking Bad*, *Dexter*, *The Leftovers* etc.) are not just normalising the trauma and disposability of our lives, they are doing it instantly, on-demand and occasionally with pretty high levels (or at least instances) of formal innovation.

I know this isn't what Etkind was referring to, but considering the role that passing of time plays in mourning, I wonder if the speeding-up of *'making it productive'* alongside the persistence of constant low-level trauma is what forms all these deformed forms?

**K** I think it is interesting to look at the functions and political desires of artistic or cultural production in this regard. Freud distinguishes mourning from melancholia<sup>17</sup> and argues that the former overcomes the loss of the loved object in affirming its finitude while the latter is experiencing this loss as one of the self, as an irredeemable deprivation of one's own life. This seems to resonate with the TV series you mention, only that they are not collectively mourning by fetishising collective melancholia, which seems to be a rather reactionary move. But, it poses the question of form, of the subject form and its life forms, its culture and sociality, yet again as one of catastrophe. To me Lu Märten's work is exemplary in framing such questions of an expanded sense of form. She was a contemporary of Walter Benjamin, but she was self-taught, and a proletcultist, a feminist publicist, and well, a woman, so, unsurprisingly, her work is hardly known today. She worked as a journalist

16 Alexander Etkind, *Warped Mourning: Stories of the Undead in the Land of the Unburied* (Cultural Memory in the Present), USA: Stanford University Press, 2013, p.1ff

17 See Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', 1917, <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/hs/medical/clerkships/psych/misc/articles/freud.pdf>



and published a lot, but her main work, *Wesen und Veränderung der Künste* (1924),<sup>18</sup> argues for a sense of form beyond art. Raiding hundreds of years of cultural history, she demonstrates that each society produced an understanding of form of which its artistic productions were mere points of repercussion, and she argues that in order to revolutionise art and society alike one needs a fundamentally expanded sense of form. I guess this is what we both desire in thinking about catastrophe, no? And it is what can be found in [Deleuze](#) and [Guattari](#), in [Haraway](#), in [Kathy Acker](#), in [Sadie Plant](#)...

And also this is what is fundamentally lacking within the opposition of capitalism and socialism as modernist models. Their self-legitimation was not primarily argued through social or cultural forms, but as competing systems of reproduction – an inherently functionalist understanding of form. Their equally administrative understanding of human life allows them to agree on that very temporality which today presents itself as infinitely catastrophic: the insistence on the linearity of human (re)production. This linearity is disturbed in what you quoted from [Etkind](#), but it remains intact in the TV series you mentioned. Horror might today serve as a fictional mode of creating what [Benjamin](#) called ‘*a real state of emergency*’, not in the sense of nihilism but within the perspective of a sociality in a state of trauma.

And this might not only be why horror is back, but also why historically seemingly more shady movements like mannerism (late 17th century), symbolism (end of the 19th century), or Russian futurism (beginning of the 20th century) today regain an enhanced relevance, or even just an enhanced legibility, because they propose different temporalities, they defy linearity, because they defy the idea of modernity as progress.

Where one sees catastrophe as nothing but an ending, the perspective at stake is highly problematic because it assumes the normalcy of the reproduction of the very status quo that became catastrophic. Where, on the other hand, an understanding of catastrophe begins from putting into question the past that led to this present, there is a fundamental reconfiguration of the material residues at stake which we are faced with within our catastrophe, and so there is the possibility of another epistemic order that is built not from the unthinkable brutality of an absolute break but from understanding catastrophe as the consequential diversion and deformation you describe. What evolved as a crisis of financialised capital in 2008 has turned into a catastrophe not least because this no longer is a crisis that can be re-aligned with an intensified exploitation of human life as human labour. This catastrophe was not a crisis of labour—it was and is a crisis of life.

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18 Lu Märten, *Wesen und Veränderung der Formen/Künste* *Wesen und Veränderung der Formen und Künste: Resultate historisch-materialistischer Untersuchungen*, Germany: Verlag Werden und Wirken, 1949.

**A** In a text from 1995, in which [Kathy Acker](#) lays out her own drive towards narration in face of this crisis of life, she writes, via recourse to [Hannah Arendt](#), that:

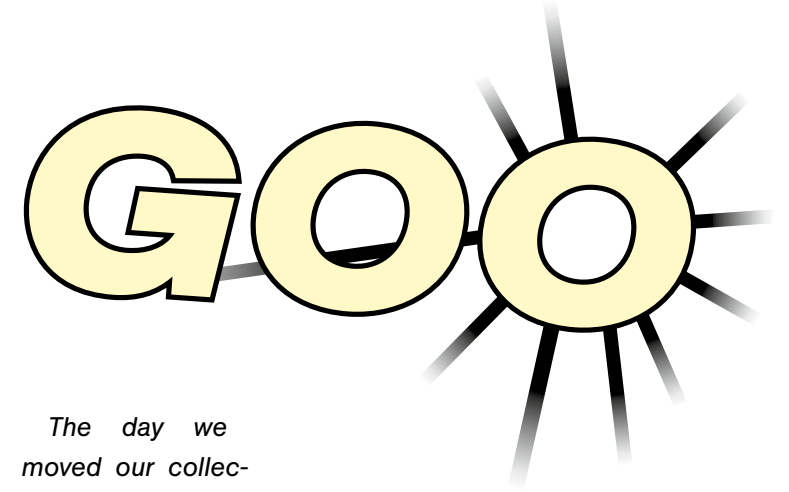
Arendt knows that writing, narration, does not end suffering: writing masters nothing. Narration, writing does something else. It restores meaning to a world which hardship and suffering have revealed as chaotic and senseless. When Arendt talks about story, about narration and narrative, she is not talking about a master narrative. She is talking about language as it moves from one point to another point. She is talking about meaning as it reveals itself and so is co-equivalent to language. Hannah Arendt suggests that the meaning of a ‘committed act’, that is her phrase, is revealed only when the action itself has come to an end and become a story susceptible to narration. That is, ‘insofar as any mastery of the past is possible’, thus, insofar as any mastery of suffering is possible, ‘it consists in relating what has happened.’<sup>19</sup>

But what if the action itself *doesn’t* come to an end? What if you are still in the middle of it? Or rather not even *still* in the *middle*—there is no middle, there is no foreseeable end, the next action already overlaps the existing one without ending it and so forth?

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19 Kathy Acker, ‘Writing, Identity, and Copyright in the Net Age’, *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, Spring 1995, vol. 28, no. 1, Identities, p.94.





*The day we moved our collective body was a hot one. I remember wearing shorts. Unprotected rocky plains of Lavrio. The wind was biting, the sun was piercing. We met in the midst of commotion – of traffic. We formed a soft bubble and slid through and through. Bus rides can either emphasise an already insufferable awkwardness, or force a kind of superficial, sincere, temporary, lasting bonding. In this case, it was the latter, fortunately. /// Fast-forward to the afore-mentioned plains. Rock 'n' Ruins and Rough edges. Archaeology and layers of history and history of archaeology. Remembering the Recording of the Recollection and Retelling of the history of Ruins. Howling wind – Noisy sound. The dead cat cannot fully protect the mic. I remember being in a trance-like state. Following along, looking around, making small-talk. Field trip is over. Slept on the bus on the way back. Funny how vague this became. Not sure if I experienced it that way, or if it was just so inscribed. /// A soft wobbling mass was eventually formed out of the bubble. It came to be in consciousness before it came to be into space. A sense of confirmation, to find a place in space. A space in place. A sense of unspoken satisfaction. I cannot be whole, unless I am a clear physical manifestation. It was, admittedly, quite spasmodic, at first.*



Quite loose. Quite abstract – the physicality of the whole thing, that is. Cold and empty, generic space. Paint over paint. Dust over dust. Name over name. A solid mould for the semi-liquid to nestle in, to feed, to hatch, to grow. To dive into torpor in periods. A liquid is a nearly incomprehensible fluid that conforms to the shape of its container but retains a constant volume, according to Wikipedia. A space is given. We grow accordingly. Gigantic goldfish in a pond. /// Winter came and the pulsating goo got in a plane to meet its other half. We moved again. We crawled onwards and upwards. In the Alps, confined in the room. Collectivity has to be self-inflicted, otherwise what's the point? Small, wooden room in the hut. The word is cozy. Perfect size and location to settle in. For the time being at least. Assume a shape and then drop it. Need to find the perfect temperature just a few degrees above freezing point. Memory foam mattress /// In a nutshell. Got lost the first time I tried to get there. Small, residential-looking gallery. There are holes in the ceiling (the bones are showing), industrial aesthetics. The soft wood of the floor was comfortable to sit on. Found some treasure in the garbage. Rolled it home and turned it into our publication display. Tadaa! Put up transparent plastic. Hung it from the ceiling. To protect the dinner-table surface from spilled wine. Hard to wash out. Irreparable. Neon bars make everything look more chic [sic]. Time started pressuring us – as time always does.

‘When do you perceive time?’, she asked. She printed, she stuck on the wall. We built a freakin’ wall! /// Then there was a gap. Blink.

Opened my eyes to find myself in a space full of people.

New walls. Softer and warmer ones. No rough edges.

/// Now it's warm. The memory foam morphed into tissue. Once again pursued collectivity. Picked a bigger house this time. Reminiscent of aristocracy. Looking over the whole land. Felt like living in a movie-set. Could see the beginning and the end. Farther out there's liquid. /// We didn't form a body. A many-headed creature with no body would only leave orphan heads rolling down the stone stairs. But this was not the case. The bodyless hydra was a worm. The clay parts stuck together (didn't mean to sound Biblical). Took breaks to dip in water and then joined the formless form. Leaving bubbles of air in between the mass is bad for ceramics. The pot will explode in the kiln. I did enjoy this place in between. There was more space. The perforated form can't take the kiln heat though.





# A BIG BLACK TABLE

## EASY TO STRETCH

1

A big black table easy to stretch for more friends. Avocado on a board, Knäckebrot, a big pot of spaghettis and a pan of tomato sauce. One noodle is connecting the surface of the table with the inside of the pot. A 🎵 radio is playing pop music. When ~~~~~~~~ touched it, it was so gluey that she had to wash her hands again.

*Oh I want to have a cigarette, too.*

*Honestly today we brought it down a little bit, I mean in comparison to yesterday today the discussion went in a bad way. But I think everybody was tired. I felt it in the morning already.*

*Because yesterday was so enthusiastic?*

*No, it was not. It was not enthusiastic. No, I think today no one was listening. Yesterday people were listening.*

*We almost got into a fight yesterday at the bar.*

*Oh you went to a bar after the full day? We were sleeping...*

*Yeah, suddenly there was a spontaneous suggestion to go to this Russian bar...*

*So we missed something good?*

*No it was quite calm but...*

*...then I called you an ass and I want to say sorry for it.*

*Because I, it was... I didn't intend it, I was really discussing with ~~~~~~~~ and it just came out of my mouth and afterwards I wanted to do just like Will Holder in his speech, doing this gesture...*

*[~~~~~~~~ abruptly brings his hands over his mouth.]*

*But then it was too late.*

*I don't remember you calling me an asshole!?*

*In retrospect, it's less marvellous, less awe-inspiring, less cringe-worthy. We are, after all, re-telling. Trying in vain to bring ourselves back into that state. Like Elizabeth the 1st tried in vain to sound intelligent. To not lose her flow. Her stream of consciousness. Like English gardens, opposing the French ones, tried in vain to imitate nature.*



To grasp that je ne sais quoi. Elusive. Post-it notes and compartmentalisation for a better understanding of things. Everything is now less cinematic, less movie-like—ever disappointing. Replicating. An ode to a dead experience. Preferably eloquently put. Maybe an extra adjective will turn back time.

What were you discussing about?

It was about Will Holder's workshop and the reaction of the group, because I thought that he was really manipulating us and he had a clear intention. He wanted us to think something and he used strategies to bring us there.

I felt like it was not a free choice anymore, because of this manipulation.

I am just doubting that 30 people are changing their mind in one hour and then it is completely the opposite and everybody is thinking.

'Oh he showed us something great, now it is time to do it'.

And I was there and felt just uncomfortable in this workshop. That's a good thing in a workshop with so many people who have to solve so many problems.

At the beginning I was also very skeptical and at the same time interested in him because he was acting in this performative way and you never knew which thoughts he is following behind this acting. At some point, and I think it was because I liked some of his gestures, at some point I thought,

'Ok just bring me somewhere! I trust your gestures, they are really sensitive, go on I want to see more of it'.

But he was so authoritarian and patronising you.

It's more about the way it happened, not the result.

But why do you care so much about the way it happened?

Because I felt really bad in this moment.

Why did you feel that bad?

He asked this question,

'Which kind of reading do you prefer?' and it was not about this question, it was a tool for something else. And then he said something like

'Thank you for taking care' to me and everybody was laughing. He wanted to show me that he knows something about me.

For me he is just a person looking to small things, taking care about the details. For me this is a major part of his persona. I was wearing this jumper and he said,



'Ah nice jumper'. And I asked myself why is he telling me that I am wearing a nice jumper...

...Because he thought that it will make you happy. He was trying to take a risk, to connect with you.

No, I can really understand Hannah Black when she interrupted him saying,

'Stop it, don't do this anymore. You are always referring to me and I am sitting here in the audience. Stop it!'

He wanted to bring intensity into the space.

[ turns up the volume of the  radio.]

He just pushed the right buttons. He used his power in an interesting way. It was for us, it was not about his intentions... I mean, for us it worked because afterwards we started to talk to each other in a way we never did before.

I have a gun on my head and I keep pressing the wrong password to disarm the alarm. Check. Mystic pet. Check. Alcohol. Check. A group of semi-friends, semi-strangers. Check. This is not just business.

What is the English word for 'zaubern'?

Doing magic?

Tricking.


Yes, he was a good trickster. Like watching a magician... It's obvious that the trick is not real and you have two options: you can say he is manipulating and making fun of me, or you can say, I trust you I want to play this game because it is gaining distance (perspective) to the question of what is true or what is not true, because it opens up previously unknown possibilities. It's like a party where everybody is celebrating like it would be the last night on earth—of course being aware of the fact that this is not the truth.

But I don't want to be the rabbit of the magician.

No, you don't have to be the rabbit. You're paranoid.

The master of puppets. We were listening to Metallica today in the car when we bought the paper for the silkscreen workshop. In his talk he said that he doesn't want to be a teacher right? That he just wants to create moments.

Or situations...

I saw  writing down in big letters: YES WE WILL DO THIS and it reminded me on the Merkel sentence WIR SCHAFFEN DAS!

We will do it.


Yes We Can.

#  
throw away the idea  
of the book and  
just take care of the  
language  
(0 Retweets 19 Likes)

#  
I can feel part of the  
group bc there's space  
in between them all  
(0 Retweets 2 Likes)

I liked when he said,


'Please forget the word collectivity. It is in the relation amongst the different people and about what is happening.'

[ Words don't come easy to me. How can I find a way to make you see...]

It's so cheesy.

He talked about music in such a romantic way,

'Music happens when people get together, music changes your life.'

[ puts vodka shots on the table.]

#  
2nd night in the  
turtle room. I don't  
like it when I can  
hear the turtle  
walking around.  
(0 Retweets Likes 9)

#  
Language is so neo-  
liberal all the true  
revolutionaries  
communicate in  
birdsong.  
(0 Retweets Likes 37)

If we go back to the conference I also liked the way Hannah was dealing with this different levels of reality; How she, for example, included the digital media and treated a tweet as important as political thought.

It is the first time I can feel the space. 'Heute kann ich kaum ein Wort schreiben, wenn nicht zugleich ein Freund auf dem Schirm ist'. It was the first time I could feel a movement.

And did it influence your thoughts, like, your personal thoughts? What happened to you? What was it? Another—you wake up, or what?

Well, I thought a lot about you post something in the internet, or you say



something and you publicate it or you do an art thing and two years after you think,

‘Oh fuck, what did I do?! Oh my god.’

And then you often see an art and think,

‘Oh this artist is shit’

and then you read something about them and then she or he says:

‘Yeah but this was my young times,’ and I was embarrassed about this, but you already have this picture in mind of this artist who hates his art piece. And then I think,

‘Oh wow this great artist, I want to handle it like this, and just write a text about it.’

And Hannah was like

‘Oh fuck! This is about this self-reflecting,’ but she kind of used it for herself. I would have been like,

‘I cannot read it.’

And then I thought,

‘oh it’s a talent to be so catchy and be engaging, but then okay, if she is on Twitter, this maybe happens very often to her, and she’s able to handle it. That’s why I liked her very much, but maybe she’s telling me everything, like she knows me since always’ and then I thought,

‘Hm, ok...?’

If she would be on TV I would watch her.

Did you say,

‘If she would be on the TV I would watch her?’

[ enters the room.]

[Everybody:]

Ohhhhhh hi!

Do you have another chair?

Thank you!

Some people already found their way back to their seats or onto the tribune. It is a little bit like in an ancient theatre, something between a circle and a semi-circle. It seems like the organisers were not able to decide between one of the two options. The mirror behind the plant fills the gap. When is the moment the chatting ends and the official talk continues when there is no curtain or a special light?

You can have a really good evening with Hannah, like, you are super entertained, but it’s like her first sentence,

‘I’m so afraid of being boring or being bored’.

I could say,

‘Yes, I’m afraid of being boring’.

but then, I don’t want to hang out with her because I would be afraid of being boring and bore her.

Also during the talk I thought hopefully she is not bored.

There’s a really strange atmosphere. It was getting darker. And there’s this sort of wide light, and she was like, I don’t know—gesturing and talking and talking and talking and there was also light in her eyes and I thought,

‘Is she real?’

And sitting there, totally tired of the workshops and all the stuff. And I didn’t get ANY sentence, really! I stopped listening, I just was watching, and I really enjoyed that kind of watching TV. I never have seen somebody talking like this. And then with the mobile phone all the time. She was like the Electric Lady. I was completely somewhere else.

You also overact in a way, right? That’s a good thing at performances, right? You don’t give the possibility to ask or to interrupt you. You really want to ‘Pew, pew, pew’, that’s all I think. Then I’m not real anymore.

After all I think that Hannah was the only authentic person at the...

We should tweet that.

You know what? She was also fake.


Stop saying, ‘Do you know what?’

You want to fight?

I don’t want to fight.

#  
It's ok I will never  
see any of these  
people again v often  
(0 Retweets 0 Likes)

I think you only have this opinion now because there was a personal relationship between you. No? And that’s what Will said, that you cannot write about collectivity when you don’t do it.

[ is reading some notes from the conference.]

‘She always wanted to be a man.’

I think she loves literature, so there was sometimes a sensitivity. An important sentence,

‘Thank you for your kindness!’

But she didn’t sign it!


But she put a heart on it! It’s more important...

She said,

‘Detach.’

Detach. I think why I wrote it down. To distance. To gain some kind of distance towards what you’re writing about, without losing the emotions.

Between art and theory are emotions.

[While transcribing the sound files  shows a picture of the conference space on his mobile.]

On half-speed, everybody sounds completely stoned. The conference space shows black wooden boxes on the bar filled with a lot of stuff. A black lantern behind the cover of an LP by Yoko Ono and John Lennon. Both are framed. A hand crème, a cube, a safety razor, a side cutter and a pink thing which looks like something between a sex toy and an art piece by Jeff Koons. On the box there are tulips from the day before yesterday. Below the mobile lies the printed speech Maria Muhle did in her blue glittering pullover,

‘...use the notion of realism precisely to call into question this division between art and non-art, the creative and the purely mechanical and focus their concerns on the subject matter of representation: the reality that is to be represented without omitting any disturbing, unsettling or ugly detail, without beautifying the social context it reflects.’

So Hannah was talking about her writing, right? Or also about social...

...about writing.

Relation, using language in general. There are different ways of getting detached from...

From what?

The content.


Can we also say it’s the opposite of trying to be authentic concerning the content?

You make yourself through someone else, a strategy for your everyday life. I have to think about the quantified self. Quantifying self guys who do completely the opposite. That they maybe try to really stay with their content, to optimise it. This is the picture of what I want to be and I want it to be this picture. Did she mean the opposite?

She kind of wrote about her personal relationships somehow, as well, and she also wrote about special phenomena and theories and through that she de-tached herself from it.



It reminds me of a sentence Will said about our language and that he as a native speaker is more interested in these mistakes or in an non-controlled acting, or in an non-controlled part of the self, or... I don't know.

Yeah, yesterday when I was sitting in the metro with . She gave me a book from Jean Genet...


Who?

A philosopher I think...


A film-maker...

A writer right?

A film-maker. He made films!

There are 100 books by Goethe.  got them on Ebay for one Euro. The fish tank looks mystic. It's creating a rainforest feeling. I know the turtle is hungry. It's been five days since it's eaten.

There was this book about him and I started reading in Greek and I thought for a second that it would be also really nice to try because this is a special thing about this book that we speak different languages. It's probably an utopian idea to try to learn each other's languages good enough. It might had worked in three years. I just...

And also that's something  told me. He told me maybe the opposite, that he enjoys writing in English, because he gets detached from his own content, because he's not used to write in English.

Yes, I can't write in Greek, it's retarded, I only read English books.

Yeah, but when I write in English then I feel like the example from Hannah, with the translations, it's getting such a simple language and you are talking about nothing.

For me when I'm talking German, I'm even less funny; I cannot make jokes so easily...

Every joke is already gone when you find the right words. Because maybe I'm too close to the content and in English I recognise sometimes people laugh. Sometimes.

It's funny how things you note down make so much sense to you at that moment, but then you read it...

Yeah it's what he was saying,  
'Reproduce it on printed paper and then what happens is a collective reading process.'

## 2

[ Reading notes.]

'We are the hippies -insiders.'

Do you also have a family experience?

I used to be a hippie. My parents were too young to have been hippies.

My dad for example went with the VW- Käfer...

Like VW-Van.

No, not the van, the small one, the Beetle.

Ah my father had the same.

He went with the car to Athens. In the '70s with a really long beard.

My parents had that car too and they went to Italy and they left it open and it was raining and there was water like that and they did not know how to get it out. So they just made a hole in the floor of the car and then they drove back for 12 hours and it was so loud because they had a hole above the street.

Best idea ever.

It's not about sad hippies sitting in a VW Beetle.

When my mum was young she used to live in a commune. She came to Germany when she was 20-something and she lived in a commune with lots of other people. They raised their children together, until she met my sister's father.

So you still have the hippie inside you?

I don't know, maybe because I want peace and happiness for everyone?

But how should we get through these hippies?

Do we have to?

Why did Hannah mention the hippies?

She said if we are hippies, we are enemies of the state. She said new enemies of the state are hippies, insiders and environmental activists.

She said it concerning this story from the '70s or '80s about the police and this undercover cop 'K'. The police thought they had to infiltrate the environmental activist group, because they were somehow dangerous.

What story? Was it fictional?

No. K as this undercover cop became part of this 'dangerous' environmental activist group. He had relationships with several or one woman in the group and when it blew up, they sued him. He took advantage of them, trying to find out their secrets and pretending to be in love with them. 'Love' was his job.

Sounds like a script of a Hollywood movie.

And how did Hannah connect it to the present?

I don't really remember if she connected it with the present. She connected it with her own experiences and with some theory texts—I don't remember what exactly.



She talked too fast I didn't get what she meant.

So we as hippies are the enemies of the state, concerning the police.

...Environmental activists...

What? Envire...

Environmental

EN VIRON MENTAL

Ënvironmētál

[Laughter]

[🎵 Des'ree singing 'Oh life']

You said, 'WE as hippies'?

Hippie activists. 'Hippie' as an umbrella term...

New enemies... New animals of the state are hippies, insiders and environmental activists.

But, seriously, what did she mean by 'insiders'?

I didn't get it. At the Reality Through Fiction conference last year Hans-Christian Dany was talking about movements at the edges. What I got out of it was the complete opposite of what Hannah says about insiders. Dany's talk was about cybernetics. You have to be an outsider. You can't be a prime minister and at the same time a radical outsider.

I think the question is if you can only be against something if you are...

THAT'S THE POINT! We have this question all the time.

What question do we have all the time? If you can be against something?

Of course you can be against something, but it is about finding a certain kind of language. A language which is not using the same logic, which differs from the thing you want to fight against.

You don't have to be an outsider to be against it. You can do your work and so on and you don't have to quit your job to be radical.

I'm not sure about that because I used to know many people who had these ideas, but they took money from their parents to make a living.

Is it a problem to take money from your parents to make your living?

But I said you don't have to quit your job.

If you are against it, just believing in something doesn't change anything, nor talking about it.

No. You can work and be in the union. If you quit your job, then you need money from your parents. I don't say quit your job, but try to do something with it.

#  
I slept in a room  
w a tortoise  
but it was fine  
the turtle just sits there  
in its artificial environment  
w its head up  
waiting for insects,  
I relate.  
(0 Retweets 11 Likes)

It doesn't work for me. For some people it works. But I just want the whole thing. It's a semi-, I just can't explain it.

'Semi-', I know what you mean... semi- something.

Like SURVIVAL KIT is semi-self-organised.

— told us via Skype that all these art-world people are coming to Greece because Greece is a political thing now. The new colonialism...

The fish is stinking everywhere, you don't have to go to Greece for it.

I just don't believe that anything big will happen.

Did you believe some time ago that something will happen? That something will change? Did something happen?

People happened. I saw many situations around me and nothing happened and I quit.

And now?

Now I'm fine with it. Sometimes I get angry with things. But it's ok.

So you are tired?

Yeah.

And you're fine with it?

Yeah, I try to be fine with it.

Now you just try to manage your life.

[🎵 Try to see it my way/ Do I have to keep...]

Uhm... and it's hard as well I think, at this age and in Greece. It's quite hard to decide and you can't do anything you like because of money of course.

I don't know. It's quite hard. I don't know what to say.

[Silence.]

When I was in Greece, there was the referendum and people thought something will change. Everyone voted NO! I completely understood why everyone voted NO. They said,

'I don't accept it as it is now.'

Syriza?

I knew it from the beginning.

I really felt that some people really believed in this small movement.

But really that's the problem, that a party is representing you.

Maybe that's a good link to aesthetic realism and the question of representation.

Maria Muhle's talk at the conference about representation and self-representation...

Because maybe you have to do it on your own and not think someone will do it for you, like Syriza.

[All:]

Hmm. Yeah...

During the Skype conversation we had with —, he also said, that he's really angry about the left in Athens. They focused on creating an enemy in order to define themselves, rather than using the open space they had for new structures and change.

Why do the lefts always need a really, really big enemy to be active, that's...

The enemy is there.

Yeah still, but it's even better if the enemy is Syriza and not as big as the Nea Dimokratia and leaves you more space to do something.

So that's what he said?

He said, that Syriza failed, but they quit the police state.

Ehm, you wouldn't agree?

Where I live there was no police before and now there's police everywhere.

There is more freedom now.



No not at all. There's police everywhere. That's not freedom.

I think this is all really complex. We can't generalise...


[Silence.]  
We were in a political situation. We are in a political situation while sitting here. And this avocado is important to keep us away from the point of view where everybody brings his or her single personal 'light into the darkness.'

If I only speak about a nice dinner and avocados on a table, then I stay in the bubble and when I am just pointing out my own political answer, this is kind of an ego bubble, too. There has to be a connection to the social everyday life.

It is not an easy thing to formulate a political statement.

You can only know about the context from your own point of view. You cannot know from above because you are part of it.

It's about classes you know.

[ puts vodka shots on the table.]

It's not about...

...taking weapons and guns and driving a Porsche—making your own individual revolution.

That's also something Maria was talking about maybe. At first there has to be that aesthetic realism or political realism. It's coming spontaneously

out of the whole society, not only out of some people that want to play the revolutionary egoistic weapon...

This reminds me of 'Intellectuals and Power'. This conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze...

No. Please not again quoting Foucault and Deleuze. It always seems like an excuse or justification, when art students quoting popular theorists.


Why do we always need these big names to justify our thoughts? I love what they say, but isn't there another way to gain something out of their thoughts?

But I was relating to Maria's talk. She quoted Foucault and Deleuze. One possible way would be to find our own words but then maybe it will get really didactic because we are not as familiar with the theoretical language as Maria is. We should transform it to another kind of language.

I think the theoretical language is not the problem. I think we should discuss why the thoughts of Foucault in our own words sound didactic. If we, as the unintellectual mass, can perfectly speak for ourselves why do we need Foucault?

Do you think we are the unintellectual mass?

The pets of the state.

[ moves to another table.]  
[Awkward laughter.]  
[Uncomfortable Silence.]

The big table in the middle is decorated with those 80 cent candles. Don't touch the candle, you'll burn yourself, it's been burning for a long time now. Not too much light, just enough—just enough to barely see the others face and the food you've been eating while balancing it on your knees...

[CRACK!]

Oh sorry, whose pen is it?

[Laughter.]

Keep it.

It's yours?

What?

He's biting the pen.

I love it with Stabilos.

IIHHHHH! I thought it before, ah he is biting his pen, but now...

It's yours?

No it's mine.

[Laughter.]  
[Clapping.]

No, it's ok, don't worry.

[Silence.]

But, we have had a political discussion. Are you happy now?

You're not?

Yeah, I'm happy.

Something that is unpublished. Anecdote, a short account of a real incident or person, often humorous or interesting. An (NOT, UN) ékdotos (PUBLISHED), ekdidomi (I PUBLISH), ék (OUT) didomi (I GIVE). If you print something, it becomes something else, it becomes the truth. It represents the truth, it's no longer just the thing itself, the conversation between us.

Yeah, so it works, doesn't it?

We will have the discussions anyways.

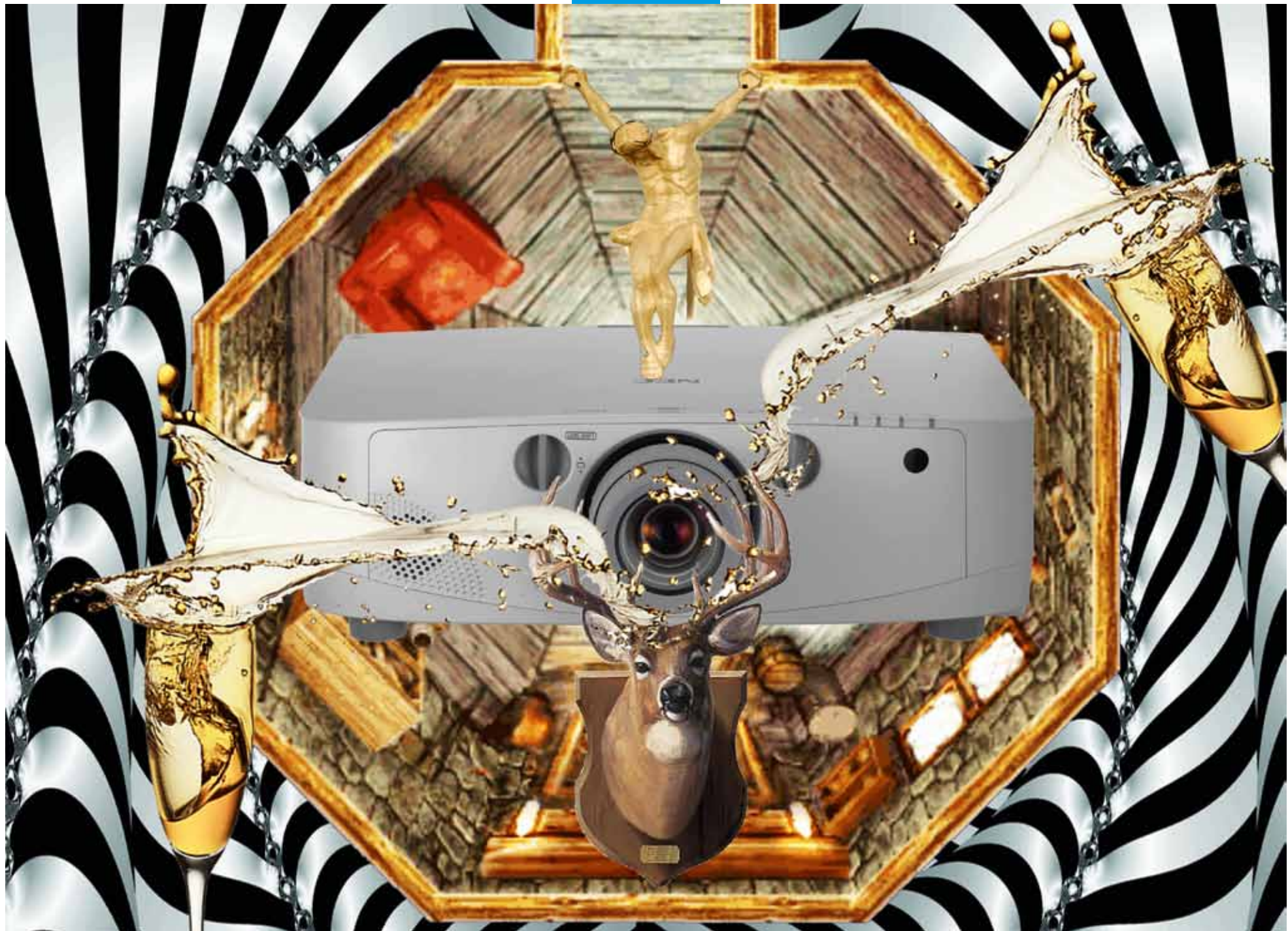
Who wants another Schnaps?

Yeah I want another Schnaps.

Can I have my pen back or do you wanna finish it?

We're talking about the conference. And it's like always the same words come up in another meaning. Combining them with different opinions and feelingWs. Like a washing machine that circles the dirty luggage. I used it the last days. Smoke in the room—something in the water. Let's hang it up to dry. It's private now. They already left. Can't sleep—

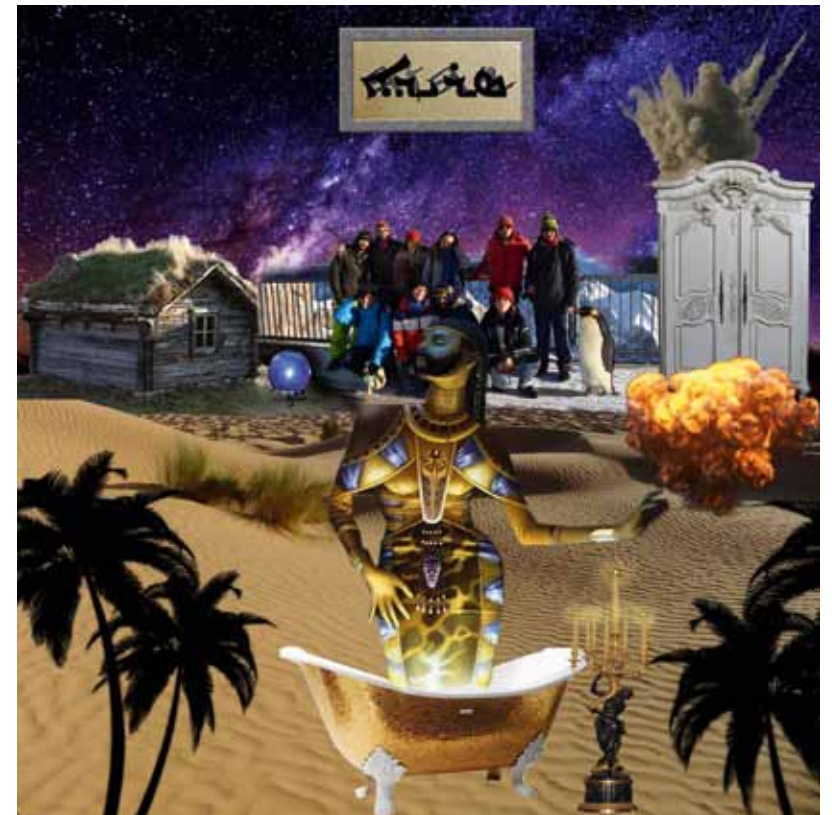






## ***S - KIT EPISODE III*** Double Aramaic Alpine Dream

— BY CIVEL MOMO





After the future there is another future.  
I am a doubter and an adaptor a chameleon phlegm.  
I travelled today where people have many acres.

After the end there is another end.  
I am a hitchhiker and a contestant a chameleon gestalt.  
I travelled today where people have many hopes.

After the valley there is another valley.  
A howling for all of the things never been shown.  
I travelled away towards a hut in a Sahara-Alpine setting.  
Never ask the things not yet be shown.

I had a dream about a closet again,  
This time within a light globe.  
My eyes are covered in mascara.  
I did them in an Aramaic tiled bathroom.

Aramaic dream within my dream.  
A corridor in the hut with abandoned paintings  
Covered in mould.

Eyes. Eyes.  
Eyesight in mascara.

The hut found in Sahara.  
No rent and no fee.  
Palm trees in the yard in Alpine-Sahara.

I was invited in a fest.  
In a dream with no rest.  
I was enchanted in mistrust.  
To mistrust the dream and one person.

To follow the corridor again with no affection.  
I mumbled words in my Aramaic dream.  
The tiles have to be cleaned.  
The dream is meant to cleanse.  
The bathroom does not exist.

Persistence makes people clean themselves outside  
in the cold Alpine-Sahara setting.  
I follow my eyesight into the darkness.

If the mould is a sign and the Aramaic  
tiled bathroom a setting,  
it had to change within a bleak.  
Never wanted to get too intimate with a fourth language.  
Greek, English and German are enough.

Someone had to interfere,  
somebody had to adjust the lights.  
There was an explosion in the closet.  
There was an explosion within the dream.  
And the fest was never crowded.  
The dream was never shattered.

The water, the tiles or the eyesight.  
The black mascara,  
the eyes in Sahara.

Shattered clothes in the light globe.

The globe was yet not lightened.  
The dream was rhythmic but with no loop.

Soundscapes in the wardrobe.  
Hangers in my bathtub.  
A door within a cardboard.  
A white corridor with clothes and shoes.  
Mystic show.

Champagne almost spilled on a projector.  
In the hut in the lap of a lector.  
How wet champagne can give a new drive into the night.

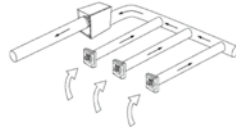
How mystified clothes can get close to hypertension.  
A level of amplified particles.

The dream stopped there.

'A volcano in my choices.  
All of the voices I thought I heard.  
An eruption of serenity voices.  
A charming violence comes always first.'

I mumbled the above lines in Aramaic.





**I woke up and within my fingers  
there was sand from Sahara.  
Then I realised that a doctor appointment  
is not the best choice.**

**I look up and there is an air ventilation system.**

**Where is my vodka?**

**I have a problem with authority  
I have a circulating infrastructure,  
and more drinks are coming up.**

**I come undone under a baroque roof  
That is not on fire.  
That cannot light up a liar.  
That can distribute me faithfully in a bar.**

**Catholic videos with gothic ceilings  
Jungle iconography and artists that are dazzled...  
Bedazzled in goulash!**

**Abject ejections out of round time holes.**

**Popes and daily routines  
Barrels of plain emptiness  
Dreams of Sahara  
Eyes with mascara**

**You get a light  
You kill the light  
You know how to spell  
To grow a hell  
For the light to grow again.**

**Clans of Titans and silver linings...  
Partitions that are used as frames.  
Flames that burn in your mother tongue.**

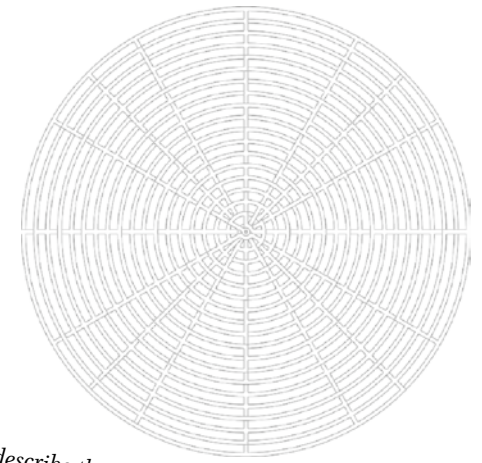
**Grave the sobriety.  
Even beginning of a new ending:**

**Lending the start to a smooth operator.**

Something has changed inside of me today and all because I fully decoded my double Alpine-Aramaic dream. After a long day at the beach, at the hut in Alpine-Sahara and after much thinking about future survival, lonely scenarios and postgraduate hopes; I came to a conclusion and experienced new horizons. My closet was exploded and I didn't know back then. I found a new way of believing in survival love. Without imposing, without intentions, without expectations, without demands.

**To water the absence for a kind  
and soft scene to emerge.  
The head is drowning the refreshment  
for absence to subvert.  
To dive into an Aramaic dream.  
To let. To remember.  
To water the fiery ember.  
I finally feel euphoric again.**

**Waves aside with changes.**



*No end and no words can be widely used to describe the elaborateness of change.*





Jesus, like Paul, was  
tri-lingual, at least.



T I T L E

Nice Style, 2016  
Powder-coated aluminium  
This fluorescent railing cuts through the space, requiring us to negotiate our way around it.  
A deliberately intense colour, it is as if a drawn gesture disrupts the gallery.\*

S U B T I T L E

(Transcript of the first seven minutes of a lecture, given while drawing MARLOW MOSS on the wall, next to “Spatial Construction in Steel” by Marlow Moss, being moved by Laura Davis, freelance conservator hired by Leeds City Art Gallery†)

A U T H O R

Will Holder

E P I G R A P H

THE SECOND PART OF DON QUIXOTE  
OTHER TEXTS

Being dead, Don Quixote could no longer speak. Being born, into and part of a male world, she had no speech of her own. All she could do was read male texts that weren’t hers.

Text 1. Russian Constructivism

1. Abstraction [...]

Squares quadrilaterals concatenations of imaginations who lack other necessary sensualities.  
The flesh which resembles flesh has to resemble Martian green gook.  
Don Quixote, Kathy Acker, 1994

I M A G E C A P T I O N S

† “Our Values Make Us Different”, 1 of 4 (Non-diegetic Hum): ‘There is a world of communication which is not dependent on words. This is the world in which the artist operates, and for him words can be dangerous unless they are examined in the light of the work. The communication is in the work and words are no substitute for this. However, there is an idea that it is a duty on the part of the artist to offer up explanations of his work to the élite who are in control of its interpretation and promotion, and the necessity of such an élite being as well-informed as possible is certain.’ Mary Martin, 1968. 2015 “Spatial Construction in Steel” by Marlow Moss, 1956–1957, wall drawing (M A R L O W M O S S), talk Installation view: British Art Show 8, Leeds Art Gallery, October 2015.

“Our Values Make Us Different,” 2 of 4 (Non-diegetic accounting): ‘there will then sometime be a history of ever yone there will be a history of everything that ever was or is or will be them,

\* Work on display in Jacqueline Donachie: Deep in the Heart of Your Brain. GOMA, Glasgow, 20 May–13 Nov. 2016

of everything that was or is or will be all of any one or all of all of them. Sometime then there will be a history of every one, of everything or anything that is all them or any part of them and sometime then there will be a history of how anything or everything comes out from every one, comes out from every one or any one from the beginning to the ending of the being in them. Sometime then there must be a history of every one who ever was or is or will be living [...] sometime all of them will have the last touch of being, a history of them can give to them.’ Gertrude Stein, 1924. 2015 “Poems from A Pioneer Museum” by Susan Howe (Coracle), 2009, wall drawing (S U S A N H O W E), talk. Installation view: British Art Show 8, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, January 2016.

“Our Values Make Us Different,” 3 of 4 (Non-diegetic prescriptive): ‘SONG// the king with/ all his medals/ rides horseback toward/ the Sacred// Heart adrift/ on the same wall/ this is his real life// meaning can take but two dimensions’ Rosmarie Waldrop, 1999, 2016. Lygia Clark Animals LC2, 1969 (Courtesy The Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection, University of East Anglia), wall drawing (L Y G I A C L A R K), talk. Installation view: British Art Show 8, Norwich City Art Gallery, June 2016.

“Our Values Make Us Different,” 4 of 4 (Non-diegetic singing): “At the moment when the artist digests the object, he is digested by society, who gives him a bureaucratic function and a title: the engineer of future leisure. That function will have no effect whatsoever on the organisation of social structures.” Lygia Clark, 1969 from memory, 2016. Cara Tolmie, Incongruous Diva, 2016, wall drawing (C A R A T O L M I E), talk. Installation view: British Art Show 8, Southampton Art Gallery, October 2016.

F O O T N O T E S

<sup>1</sup> For the artists of the Modern Movement, for Van Doesburg and the early Constructivists, the classical constants lay in the vocabulary of geometrical forms that had declared itself in Cubism. Van Doesburg’s Elementarism was based on the conviction that radically simple geometrical forms could be taken as the common elements of plastic and architectural expression. Their impersonal, entirely accessible nature enabled them to be utilised in complex structures without concealing the constructional process.

<sup>2</sup> “Robert Duncan [and Denise] Levertov shared [a] concept of the poet’s task. Both poets saw themselves as servants of Poetry’s power, not as masters of it. Both believed in words as powers rooted in a mysterious source, rather than as tokens employed at will. Out of need, the poet accesses this source by closely attending to his subject. “Writing poetry was a process of discovery, revealing inherent music,” Levertov wrote. It was then the poet’s obligation as a craftsman to realize that music in the poem. Later, in the seventies, after their friendship had ceased, Levertov described this view of the poet’s project as a sense of “aesthetic ethics,” claiming that her differences with Duncan originated here as well. For her, the need to write was related to having something at heart to say, and thus “to a high valuation of ‘honesty,’” whereas Duncan was concerned that her emphasis upon honesty could become “a form of self-coercion, resulting in a misuse of the art.”



[...]  
 While the transcript of the discussion shows mostly amity and good fellowship, one point of contention between the factions was the inaccessibility of much contemporary language poetry, which, some felt, did not serve the common reader. In support of Charles Bernstein, both a language poet and a critic, Marjorie Perloff offered that she found this group interesting because they were “trying in their own way to capture precisely the experience of what it’s like to be alive today.” When the talk became more specific, Bernstein claimed to defamiliarize language so as to resist historical forces and prevent language from being taken for granted. This practice was unacceptable to Levertov. She reminded everyone that language is “common property, part of the commonweal made by all people with different manifestations,” and that there’s a “consensus about individual words and about syntax.” It is wrong, Levertov argued, to “take language to oneself as private property,” for it is “part of the very nature of human beings . . . to have communion with one another,” and the deliberate violation of traditional syntax, in making that difficult, is “arrogant” and “pernicious.” While she allowed that new uses of language that respected etymology and traditions were fine, she thought some others were “misuses.” A champion of the avantgarde, Marjorie Perloff stepped forward in rebuttal. What about the small group of people, like herself, with whom those who break the rules of syntax do commune? Would Levertov say that was “a false communion”? Denise responded that she doubted that could really happen, that Marjorie was being “fanciful.” Other voices intervened on both sides, but when Marjorie implied again that Denise was being unduly prescriptive, Hank Lazer, the moderator, abruptly ended the discussion.

<sup>3</sup> There was the trouble with names and bound up with that the trouble with what a man and a woman was. Beyond the democratic man-voice of Williams [Carlos] or the exalted or ecstatic woman-voice of H.D., there was in one direction the possibility Laura Riding exemplifies—the tyranny of style over the matter of life, the poet’s removal from the contaminating medium, where eventually the language itself seems an Augean stable of meanings one does not want to mean. Graves too in his grammar of myth strives to restore—“the unimprovable original, not a synthetic substitute—the true language of poetry from the corruptions of other men’s uses.” “What ails Christianity is that the old Mother-Goddess religious theme and the new Almighty-God theme are fundamentally irreconcilable Catholicism is not a religion based squarely on a single myth; it is a complex of juridical decisions, often contradictory, made under political pressure in an agelong law suit between Goddess and God.” This fundamentalism, intolerance of contradictions, singlemindedness, sets Laura Riding and Robert Graves at odds with the pluralistic, many-minded poetry of Pound, Williams or H.D., where there is not one myth alone but a gathering of myths. Here the poet does not see the language as a system but as a community of meanings as deep and as wide as the nature of man has been, and he seeks not rightness but the surrender of style to the feeling of words and associations. To become impure with life, if need be.

<sup>4</sup> Some day Robert Duncan’s *H.D. Book*, his critical summa, may be published complete and start to restore the luster of that sensuous discipline of reading and of following the text wherever it leads. Perhaps the critic should stop trying to ape the judge and the prophet

and instead take counsel from the lover, such a lover as Poliphilo in the *Hypnerotomachia*, whose virtue lay in following his beloved, Polia, wherever she chose to walk.

<sup>5</sup> AIC IXH XAN (Als Ich Kan)  
 • I do as I can (Wikiquote)

cf.  
 If I can  
 When I can  
 As I can  
 Like I can  
 If I could  
 When I could  
 As I could  
 Like I could  
 If I may  
 When I may  
 As I may  
 Like I may  
 If I might  
 When I might  
 As I might  
 Like I might  
 If I’m able  
 When I’m able  
 As I’m able  
 Like I’m able

<sup>6</sup> es, ist, wenn, aber, doch, nicht; es ist, es doch, es aber, wenn es, wenn ist, es nicht, aber ist, doch ist, wenn doch, wenn aber, nicht ist, aber doch, doch nicht, wenn nicht, aber nicht; wenn es ist, es aber ist, ist es doch, wenn es aber, wenn es doch, es aber doch, we nicht ist, es doch nicht, wenn doch wenn es nicht, doch nicht ist, wenn aber doch, wenn nicht ist, ist aber nicht, wenn doch nicht, wenn aber nicht, aver doch nicht; wenn es aber ist, es aber doch is, wenn es doch ist, wenn es aber doch, es doch nicht ist, wenn es nicht ist, wenn aber nicht ist, nicht, wenn es doch nicht, wenn doch nicht ist, aber doch nicht ist, wenn aber nicht ist, wenn aber doch nicht; wenn es doch nicht ist, wenn aber doch nicht ist, wenn es aber doch nicht, wenn aber doch nicht ist; wenn es aber doch nicht ist.



<sup>7</sup> The great majority of Marxists who address the problem of proletarian culture approach it on a purely ideological level, or at very least take ideology as the point of departure for their investigations. Views on culture dominant within the Marxist sphere are characterized by a peculiar ideologism. Whenever comrades are called upon to explain social processes, including cultural ones, they begin with the production of material values. However, as soon as they attempt to explain the organizational connection between different forms of culture, they abandon their usual historico-materialist position. Thus for them, social consciousness as a form of culture takes pride of place, while material culture is sidelined. In the most extreme case, they analyze the technical system of society only in the narrow sense of a system that forms economic relations, of a system of economic relations as society's driving force.

<sup>8</sup> I don't see how you can differentiate poetry from art without the proper information. First you might see it as a poem, but with the correct information you accept it as it is intended.

<sup>9</sup> Midrash: "the eliciting from biblical verses meanings beyond the literal... according to their contemporary relevance."

<sup>10</sup> On 2 Mar 2016, at 10:54, [INTERPRETATION MANAGER] wrote:

Hello Will,

Oh ouch! Hope the recovery goes as smoothly as it can...

Attached is the transcript of the conversation (which might be easier for you to scan than the audio file).

There's obviously a great difference between the Q&A (not least its length) and the less structured Skype conversation we had. (It's that ever-present editing again..).

I hope you don't think the interview in its shortened state is too straitened.

Best wishes,

[INTERPRETATION MANAGER]

—

Dear [INTERPRETATION MANAGER],

As you know, my work is concerned with the organisation of language around the work of others. When such organisation is, in turn, produced by others in relation to my own work, an interesting possibility presents itself. I'm writing to ask as directly as possible what your authorial motives might be, in this situation.

The transcript of our exchange opens with me pointing to the self-reflexivity of the situation: where every production of language adapts to those present, in the present.

In your Q&A, I am represented as a fictional character who speaks in a certain way, in a place whose present was when your fingers pressed keys on your laptop.

Perhaps I haven't been explicit enough about conversation as a model and mode of production in my work. Conversation takes place in the present where everyone is aware of the effects that the bodies, objects and emotions present have on an outcome. The O's in the Leeds wall-drawing are an outcome of the presence of many people, and in particular my friend Ryan asking pertinent questions which I tried to answer as well as possible, without stopping the drawing process. The O's are absolutely not incorrect, they are true to the emotions, bodies and people present in that production.

Unless we acknowledge your Q&A as a piece of fiction, authored by you, I'm very afraid that the public will understand this as a 'true' question and answer situation between you and me. You might happily site yourself in that text, but I would have to ask if you would find a way of explaining that the answers are not mine.

In short: I don't understand what would be wrong with (an edited version of) the transcript. To give but one, what I'd think is an instructive example:

Transcript:

"I think a big part of constructivism and the politics that it evolved from were anti-hierarchical, anti-authoritarian and objects were made whereby people would take them apart themselves, whereby the *confrontation* with an object or the relationship with an object was very direct; it wasn't mediated by language. So I was also trying to find a way to avoid an overly didactic, or an overly instructive, or an overly prescriptive use of language in relation to objects."

Q&A:

Yes. Part of what I like about constructivism, and the politics that it evolved from, is that it is anti-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian. A lot of the work that came out of that time was designed to be taken apart or altered in some way. The relationship with the object was always very direct; it wasn't mediated by language.

<sup>11</sup> 'Romance,' Jasper Bernes, Joshua Clover and Juliana Spahr

*I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins...*

William Wordsworth, "Preface to the Lyrical Ballads"

So first there is the break, the moment that cannot be contained; then time passes, one achieves some distance, one brings the surfeit back into thought, patiently reproduces its



intensity but now as representation, as form. One realizes the truth of the original moment, but in a *measured* way. The measure, the bringing to heel of the original overflow, is precisely Wordsworth’s break between language and real life.

[C: The interpretation of Wordsworth’s compositional practice as a “bringing to heel of the original overflow” is strikingly contradicted by the passage of the ‘Preface’ here produced to corroborate it. Wordsworth does not say that poetry originates as overflow and is later measured out into thought, representation, verses, or whatever is its destination. Wordsworth says, plainly and emphatically, that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; the overflow is not the origin and there can be no question of its being brought to heel or in any other masterly style tamed or patted down. On the contrary, Wordsworth says that the origin is taken from emotion recollected in tranquillity. First in the sequence of poetic ‘gradual production’ comes recollection in tranquillity, and from that origin, when composition is truly active and really works, comes the spontaneous overflow. Poetry “is” that overflow; poetry is not the effluent or froth it strands in ink, but the action of the very flow itself.

Bernes, Clover and Spahr say that this process starts with a “break”. Possibly they mean to suggest an association with Althusser’s “coupure épistémologique”. But Wordsworth on the contrary says that writing is “gradual”: “tranquillity gradually disappears [...] emotion [...] is gradually produced.” The image of powerful feelings emerging gradually and by degrees from a sort of chemical “reaction” involved in poetic contemplation might call to mind Maine de Biran’s philosophical account of the formation of habit through the repetition of mental and physical acts. Wordsworth wished for poetry to be like a habit in that sense, a natural emotional and moral fluency acquired through steady and active exposure to objects and relations whose inherent power to deeply shape life will gradually grow into a conscious power the more intimate the poet is with its exertions. In something very close to Hegel’s sense, poetry for Wordsworth is how “substance becomes subject”: not how objects are consumed or absorbed in our representations of them, but how the strength and meaning of our relation to objects grows (extends, flourishes, becomes more complex and contradictory) the more of our lives we give to knowing them: that is, describing them, working to extend their natural eloquence, letting them speak for us and for themselves. The rule early established by Wordsworth in ‘Lines left on a Yew Tree’ (1795) is that no object that might in any sense be called “living” should be an object of contempt: If Thou be one whose heart the holy forms  
Of young imagination have kept pure,  
Stranger! henceforth be warned; and know that pride,  
Howe’er disguised in its own majesty,  
Is littleness; that he, who feels contempt  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
Which he has never used; that thought with him  
Is in its infancy. The man whose eye  
Is ever on himself doth look on one,  
The least of Nature’s works, one who might move

The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds  
Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou!  
Instructed that true knowledge leads to love;  
True dignity abides with him alone  
Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,  
Can still suspect, and still revere himself  
In lowliness of heart.

This passage deserves substantial comment. But for now, note the description of progress in the poem’s single most axiomatic line: “true knowledge leads to love.” The progress is gradual, it works in stages, it is not a break but a pursuit. It’s worth bringing in some lines of Wordsworth’s poetry, not simply to help us think about what he might mean by “gradual”, but also to help us understand the whole meaning and climate of his thinking in the ‘Preface’. Bernes, Clover and Spahr extract from the ‘Preface’ a schematic account of poetic production, set out with rigid logic like a workday: first the break, then time passes, then distance is achieved, then the surfeit is brought back into thought, where the poet who is its master pats it down into “representation” or “form”. The image is not of thinking and feeling growing gradually and in stages as the “growth of a poet’s mind”, but rather of a kind of ideological production line. What starts in this schematic overview as disjunction or rupture ends up suborned into mere art. The function of art is to bring the break to heel.]

<sup>12</sup> During a lecture on African art, I began to draw in the margin of my notes and experienced what I can only describe as an ‘exquisite’ sensation. I had not drawn for two years, having been totally committed to an intellectual quest, and the joy of hand/eye activity was almost overwhelming. I determined to find a way to be *inside* all my activities: temperamentally, I could not do this then within anthropology as I experienced it, nor did I have the ability to modify the field. I hope never to forget that brief moment of clarity.

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5  
oh dear Delphi  
old acient stones  
why  
no—yes  
ja—nein  
oxi—nai  
fuck you  
old stones  
bore me  
sorry  
maybe next time.

---

3  
Away from something heavy to plastic.  
The emotion becomes distorted for that.  
It gets unimportant,  
because instead  
something else appears.  
Eating my guts. Is it luck?  
Those people here—money still sucks.



---

8

Within a group  
not knowing  
but still being  
not wanting  
but still acting

---

2



it cannot be denied  
this city is disturbing  
sleepless I wander  
to look at all those tired faces



*Give me*

# SPACE

*Often I don't know what you were.  
All the time, an interruption, a space  
And all those spaces together added up to an arena  
And all those arenas added up to feeling abandoned*

*Once I saw you outside a lost and found office  
Bothering the man behind the desk  
The window between us kept your voice from me  
I watched the attendant become more and more frustrated  
As you bent over and held your head in your hands.  
And he held his hands up and raised his whole face  
I lip read him badly and he seemed to be saying 'outsider artist'  
and you left, crying.*

*You can't ask shift workers for personal advice, I thought  
They have their own problems.  
Famously acknowledged in texts on precarity.*

*Outside what, I wondered.  
Or outside in what kind of climate?  
Is it outside forever — like, homeless?  
Or just for a jaunt —  
Like an adventurer.  
Like one of those heroic norwegians who  
Puts high protein blocks into a sled and disappears  
for 6 months  
And comes back with cold sores but doesn't complain about it.  
Is it outside and looking in? And, if so, is it in a creepy way?  
In the dark  
And exciting yourself, trying not to make a noise?  
Or more like*

---

9

I'm not thinking of you  
because you are far enough away  
it's not about you  
it's just me



*A victim, not allowed in, so having to watch the other kids having fun  
And smiling along with their jokes  
As though they were inside.  
Love your monsters  
Take them to bed and really show them the ropes  
Not just a one night stand  
A real education  
Make money from old rope  
And spend it on an enormous art collection  
Put that enormous art collection in an old house next to the Water  
And go back, day after day, to look at the same work  
And let it give you solace  
Before you die.*

*Watch it.  
Or let someone else watch it, through a camera  
To make sure another person doesn't steal it.  
Detect motion  
That is how you know it is alive  
Then some technician, knowing another technician is watching  
Will pretend to penetrate your sculpture  
With a repetitive, porn type movement  
To camera  
And your priceless sculpture will be knocked  
Off its plinth and smash into small pieces on the floor.  
And you will fire that technician  
And they will spend the rest of their lives  
Competing with other men in bicycle racing.  
All for simulated sex with an inanimate object  
Not even for sexual pleasure  
Simply to make another man laugh  
Not even a private moment with a sculpture of a woman  
Not even a thumb circling a stone nipple  
Or lips on cold lips between the legs  
No member made hard with enthusiasm  
Meeting a surface that was always hard.  
None of the above.  
Just a joke  
Only a joke  
Stupid  
And memorable*

*And perfect for going viral  
And entering everyone's brain  
Just a stupid joke.  
Permanent, indelible stupid joke  
just  
Vast swathes of loneliness  
Interrupted by flashes of guilt.  
5 people in a room losing themselves  
A girl sits on a chair and acts like she doesn't know what is going on  
Acts like she wants to leave  
But she doesn't leave  
Even though she could very easily  
And we talk about the characteristics of someone we know.  
He is very attracted to people from Angola  
Some people have gaydar  
He has angoladar  
He gets out of breath when he walks up hills and we worry about him  
He has a low voice.*

*She can dish it out but she can't take it.  
She speaks in small bursts  
Semi aggressive  
And without an ability for marketing—too brash for that  
And that means we trust her  
Or she is old fashioned  
Not like K Hole, or something like that  
Not like a branding agency who look like artists but with more money.  
No, the opposite.  
Like a person with real hobbies,  
Ones you don't know about ever.  
Like collecting knives.*

*'It's about music and sex, do you think you would like that?'  
'Well I love music,' pauses to pick up a cup of coffee,  
'and I have always wanted to try sex.'  
She looks at her ex boyfriend and he flutters his eyelids  
in mock flirtation.  
How could it come to this?  
Playing power games with a machine.  
Like Sharon Stone play fighting with Schwarzenegger in Total Recall,  
Who did she think would win that fight?*



*I tell you how  
Because you don't want to hear about it  
You just want an audience  
A surveillance  
That is how it comes to this.*

*This is my favorite  
It has a serrated edge which decimates the inside  
Of any living being when it exits the wound.  
It is for fishing.  
Or hunting more generally.  
Although I haven't used it.*

*It's moving  
How do you know?  
The camera picked it up  
It's moving.  
Shit*

*I can't get there in time  
So call the front gate  
The line is dead  
They cut the phones?  
So use a mobile  
But we set it in the past to avoid that problem  
I know, shit.  
Stop swearing!  
God it is so impossible to feel isolated these days  
And yet...  
Yet.*

*Although I haven't used it.  
It still glints at me, often, and tells me it is ready.  
I think of it very often  
And very often it appears to me as an option  
A kind of pop up box  
A sort of target, or bonus  
Like a golden key or floating bubble  
Or something.  
It is so...  
Exquisite.*

*Lalique. What do we know about Lalique?  
They are not big enough to interact with that way  
Not even the interiors  
Well maybe the interiors.  
I would hate to see them smash  
I would hate that  
A shower of diamonds  
Concentric shards divided light into lines stretching  
Out in every direction.  
I would hate that.  
The sound heard from an office far away  
Through the air conditioning  
And a love, a craft, a hobby that we all knew about  
A hobby that became a passion  
Turned into a pile of dangerous particles  
Swept up  
And pieced back together carefully.  
By a person that we can invent from scratch  
A person whose eyes are very grey from looking too hard too often  
Who doesn't move too much  
But is always pleased to see you  
Who lives in a fenced off area  
Behind a house  
Outside  
That kind of a person  
The outdoorsy type.  
But very static.*

*I kept my side of the bargain  
If that is what it was  
A bargain  
It didn't feel like one I have to say  
It felt like I spent more that I could afford  
But I am not bitter about that  
Although I feel that you could have set up more appropriate surveillance  
Or at least vetted the guards more thoroughly.  
I suppose it IS difficult to vet for that  
For the propensity of a guard to fake penetrative  
sex with a sculpture to camera  
I suppose that is difficult to detect  
But someone we know*



*Why couldn't you get a friend of a friend  
Or something?  
I don't know, it seems so  
Cheap.  
That some stranger can just come in here  
And fake fuck my glass sculpture  
So that it breaks into many pieces on a concrete floor.  
That just seems  
Like you didn't keep your side of the bargain.  
And anyway.  
That is not what surveillance is for.  
To fake fuck to  
That is not what surveillance is for*

*I heard of an improvisation technique for acting students  
Where there is a coma patientLying in a bed in hospital  
And the junior doctor is on a night shift  
And he has been stationed in a hospital far away from all his  
Family and friends  
And he has been there for months  
Working long shifts  
With no one to talk to  
And no social life to speak of  
And the actor in the impro has to enter the  
Room of the patient in the coma  
And talk to them  
Once the doctor/actor starts, he cannot stop.  
Words keep on tumbling out of his mouth  
He just needs someone to talk to.  
And that is the technique  
To get people to start talking without inhibition  
to have a subject there who is comatose listening.*

*Yes but anything could be a weapon.  
This umbrella could be a weapon  
Yours shoes could be a weapon  
I know but I have had it for years  
Yes I know it has a serrated edge  
I know  
Could you post it to me?  
Or leave it somewhere here—in lost and found and*

*I pick it back up when I fly back?  
I am not getting angry  
I am not angry  
Don't touch me!  
I have had it for years  
Not I wont put it down it's mine  
You don't need to call 5 people  
Jesus! How ridiculous, it is a collector's item  
I don't have it for use  
I just look at it.  
Get away from me  
Give me space.*



CIRCUITSOnAIR  
RADIO SHOW #00

//I want to warmly thank Negativland and Radio Alice for being with me today through this discussion. I am Bertolt Brecht on air, on Circuits on Air and I would like to thank you for being together with us tonight, 12th of August on a discussion about the role of radio as survival kit. Have a nice evening.//

5TH SYMPHONY, FIRST MOVEMENT:  
ALLEGRO CON BRIO  
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

This was the end of the show titled “Radio as a Survival Kit” which was web-broadcasted on Circuits on Air, three months before the first web radio show. I have been looking to find this show for months in order to include it in the publication.

Looking through countless boxes in attics, garages, vinyl boxes, and also by asking friends to also look, I didn’t quite succeed to find something. On mix-cloud, where the the radio shows are uploaded, nothing exists, not even on the internet archive. I even looked around Exarcheia, and to some antique shops and vinyl stores around Monastiraki. Everyone knew about this show, either from mouth to mouth, either they have listened to it by themselves, but nobody has recorded. In times where everything exists in a tweet or a post in the internet, this show was not existing. Nowhere. The only thing I could find by searching keywords was the following tweet: //@marios\_1978: Brecht just said on #CircuitsOnAir: change this apparatus [radio] over from distribution to communication. o retweets o favorites//

EXECUTIVE WINDOW, MEMO TO FRIDAY,  
MEMO FROM THE FUTURE, DICKIE DIAMOND  
AND THE MEDIA SCHIFTER  
NEGATIVLAND

I didn’t have another choice, so I decided to send a direct message to this guy and ask him if he listened to the whole show. He answered directly as if he forever waited to be asked by someone. After a very short basic discussion, he told me to meet the following day to tell me about the show. The problem is that I had already arranged to work in a cafe that afternoon, so I suggested to him to come over and buy him a drink and talk a bit.

What are you having?

—Pour me some Raki, don’t bring any olives, I like it straight.

Here you go.

—Pretty isn’t she huh? You can see a lot of people here...

Yes it is good, it’s fine. So, I was looking for a long time for this show and you were the only one who had written something about it on twitter.

—I broke up with my girl a month ago, I will come here often, it’s cool, you can also meet people.

AUFSTIEG UND FALL DER STADT MAHAGONNY,  
ACT I: ALABAMA SONG  
KURT WEILL

Do you have any recording from the show?

—Oh, fuck me hard! I found it late by seeing a poster and so I tuned to listen to it. I never thought about it. I have kept only the songs which were playing during the radio show. I wrote them down in order to give them to you.

Thank you very much, I could use it for the publication. What do you remember from the show? Honestly, whatever you remember and you could tell me, it will be very useful for me. Oh, let me bring a small bottle of Raki in order for us to have more.

—If I continue drinking, I will probably need olives. The first thing that could be heard in the show after the intro, it was the otherworldly voice of Brecht who was welcoming Negativland and Radio Alice...my friend it was so otherworldly that I can not even describe it to you. Awkward and otherworldly! Can you imagine?

I assume I can understand it somehow, but yes it is pretty difficult to imagine it exactly, never happened to me before.

CEMETERY GATES  
THE SMITHS



—I relived this once when I heard Warholl in his grave, through a live-streaming, but I strongly prefer Brecht. Then he started criticising on the radio as a medium, with a pretty much bold way that was resembled a manifesto. It was an extremely structured speech. Generally speaking, our society has reached at a point to invent the radio but not use it wisely as a medium. It is working on the one side, it is a medium of distribution and not communication.

So did he want the listeners to have a role?

—Yes, but they are not defined by Brecht as just listeners, they are more producers than listeners. He wants a peer-to-peer communication, like in the internet. But he prefers more voices and sounds than the unknown typing of the internet. That was the point where Negativland were more active in the conversation, in the role of the listeners. They have to be able to interfere live, to make this work as an arena where everyone could enter. And even better a radio without commercials, a free-radio for free communication.

## RADIO, OVERTURE

### DOCTOR AGAINST BACH

Couldn't also this happen through television?

—I think that Brecht doesn't have the perfect relationship with television, at least not yet, but this is not the only thing. It is easier to make radio, faster, more direct.

Oh, nowadays with the internet, and with live streaming it's equally easy and you could also have image.

—Yes sure, but it is also a matter of form. From everyone in the discussion Negativland were much more talkative. On television or anyway on webtv the set up that you have to do is really specific. On radio you can easily break the structure, and have a free form. They were talking about the meaning of recycling the already existing sounds with an unordered way. To create soundscapes which come out of a process, improvisation, and all of these to break or to underline the interventions of listeners either by talking or producing sounds.

Yes, but in the end it doesn't lead up to an extremely self referential as the nature of radio is concerned?

—Ah you should have listened to the whole show from the beginning, really. This exact same thing was also the hesitation of Radio Alice. They said that radio must cover many and different subjects from Beethoven's music to Jefferson Airplane and from important political facts to love declarations.

But...

## SILENCE IS SEXY

### EINSTÜRZENDE NEUBAUTEN

—A coffee, unshaken, with much milk and one big beer.

Sorry, I'll be back.

## 4' 33"

### JOHN CAGE

—He took coffee with milk and a beer to drink them for himself?

Well, they order various things – after a while it doesn't amaze you any longer. So, we were talking about how radio should not always be self-referential, right?

—Ah yeah. You see, what makes it self-referential, is not its lack of form. Negativland said after all, that one can treat such subjects in a way that one does not become preachy and dogmatic.

And naturally, if it does indeed become too didactical, I don't think it could function as a survival kit. Ah, speaking about survival kit, you haven't mentioned yet, why they are concerning radio as a survival kit?

## COSTA VAS DA VOLDA

### LADEKABEL

—Well, what they mentioned and underlined about radio, is the importance of creating networks. The networks and the free, direct and personal communication is what consists a survival kit. And personally, because you tried to mention a lot of times the importance of internet nowadays, I believe that in the process of creating networks, internet can play an important role. Web-Radio gives you the opportunity to build your own network without geographical limitations.

Hmmm, I see, yes I totally agree. In that sense, with this kind of communication, the networks are really usefull because they are going far beyond the national identities, right?

—Yes! ...sorry, could I use the phone for a bit?

Yes, of course.



I'M IN LOVE WITH A GIRL  
WHO DOESN'T KNOW I EXIST  
ANOTHER SUNNY DAY

—I need to go. I will after all go out with this girl. Apologies, but I'd rather do that than keep talking about radio and drinking raki—regardless of me always doing such things.

He laughed

No problem, if you happen to find more material you have forgotten about, besides the playlist, just call me.

—It goes without saying. Write me your phone

Here it is. Thanks.

—Bye. Good luck with everything.

IN THE BEGINNING  
NEGATIVLAND

CircuitsOnAir is the web radio of Circuits and Currents. It is run by students. Till now there are two radio shows in its programme. The one in Athens takes place every Saturday and the other one in Munich every Sunday. The Radio Shows are mainly sound collages with live improvisations.

SCORE

The following score deals with the hierarchies created in the survival kit program. It consists of three movements and a finale. Each movement represents different power relations found in the S-kit project. The musical notation is created based on graphic symbols and motives. For each movement follow the instruction given. The instruments are just a suggestions and are open to different interpretations, as well as the duration.



1<sup>ST</sup> MOVEMENT:  
MENTORS & PARTICIPANTS

For piano, cello, percussion  
and prerecorded sound.

Instructions:  
Pitch is indicated by the position  
of the symbols on the graphic pentagram,  
represented by prerecorded sound.

[Piano]

*ff* *dim.* *mp* *f*

[Cello]

*ff* *cresc.* *p* *p*

[Percussion]

*ff* *ff*

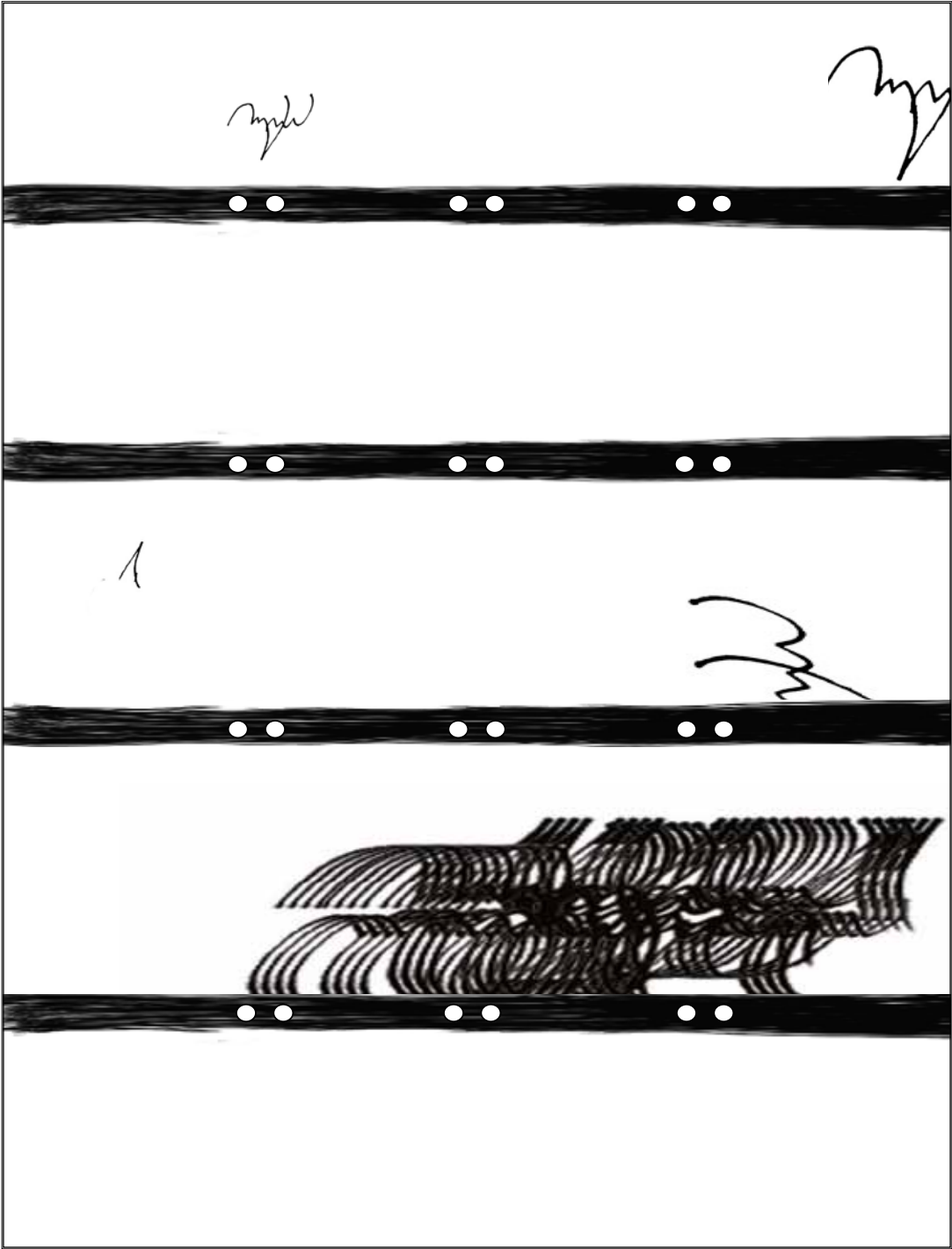
A handwritten musical score for three instruments: Piano, Cello, and Percussion. The score is written on three staves, each with a graphic pentagram. The Piano staff features a series of black squares of varying sizes, with dynamic markings *ff*, *dim.*, *mp*, and *f*. The Cello staff shows a series of vertical lines, with dynamic markings *ff*, *cresc.*, and *p*. The Percussion staff displays a series of circles of varying sizes, with dynamic markings *ff* and *ff*. The score is framed by a thin black border.



2<sup>ND</sup> MOVEMENT:  
INSTITUTIONS & SURVIVAL KIT

Digital baseline for cello.

Instructions:  
This movement is read linearly.  
Inconsistent graphic symbols represents  
the cello's part.





3<sup>RD</sup> MOVEMENT:  
PARTICIPANTS

For rain stick, piano and cello.

[Rainstick]

*ff* *dim.* *sf*

[Cello]

[Piano]

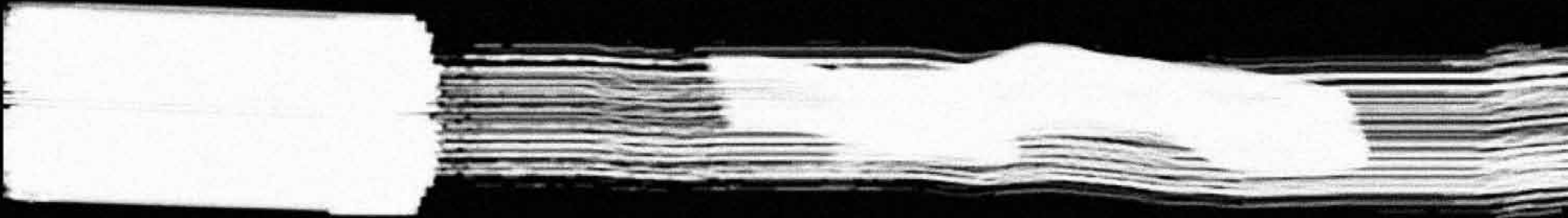
The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Rainstick, Cello, and Piano. The Rainstick part is represented by a horizontal band of grey dots at the top, with a large, dense cluster of dots on the left and a smaller, more dispersed cluster on the right. A bracket labeled 'dim.' connects these two clusters. The Cello part is represented by a series of vertical lines of varying lengths, with a large, dense cluster of lines on the left and a smaller, more dispersed cluster on the right. The Piano part is represented by two staves, a treble staff and a bass staff. The bass staff has a large, dense cluster of wavy lines on the left, labeled 'ff', and a smaller, more dispersed cluster on the right, labeled 'sf'. The treble staff has a large, dense cluster of wavy lines on the right, labeled 'sf'.



FINALE

Prerecorded sounds and  
live voice improvisations.

[Pause\_\_\_\_\_]





**DO YOU KNOW  
ENTECHNO SONGS?  
WHEN IT SOUNDS NICE,  
BUT YOU DON'T GET  
THE SENSE**

The space enters me and destroys my walls  
Is this planned to be the end?  
For how long do you plan to stay?  
For 2 or 4 A3: Maybe  
You look downstairs and **(I)** don't get it  
Your strength of blindness is really weak  
In the opposite do nothing but hang (*—hang the DJ—*)

A house that could be a group.  
A group that could be an image  
The image becomes the game  
The loser lost time  
The player becomes an architect. Again  
The text transforms into dirt.  
The last dirt enters the room. Via smoke  
smoke cigarettes @ the seaside  
smoke them 4 the seasons  
Drink WodkaBull @ the beach as well  
Drink BullPure @ the beach too. To relax  
Weapons to towels!

The face is salty again. Your image is wanking  
(*später nachschauen, was wanken eigentlich heißt*)  
again.

The waves came . Your parents are growing old.  
I like your grey parents very much.

(*I hate the way you people touch*)

And your parents are not O.K. with this. Pretend!  
The emergency room interrupts these romantic moments

All the good/nice words:  
*SPIRIT SPILLIT KILLIT STIRIT STIRBIT LIMIT*

The deadline died  
Your hairs are fried  
Your skin leaves you  
Your ideas go and play the flute  
Too many waves create the flood  
Too many sexy cooks salt the soup

Voodoo is calling.  
Drop the phone! What could it mean to hold (*talk to*) the *MIC*?  
It could mean: 'Some go stealing'  
The boredom contributes to this event and is tickling you @ your feet  
I need a break, I need a time change  
No you need a break

disrupting alternative management  
manage alternative disruptings

Should I use words, when I don't understand their meanings,  
or how to write them?  
Care more about the outlook then care about the family  
Different colors for some of the feelings.  
And then show and tell (*us*) about  
your newest painting.  
With all the worst wishes and hopes that they never hang in rooms.  
Keeping them in the fridge.

Lightening seems to be born  
What can go and what can not go?  
What's O.K and what's not so O.K?  
Presenting: *MAYBE!*  
In persons: presents  
See the present as a person  
The person is individual and shows its individuality  
through the snakeskin-leather-belt, the Ego and some  
chewing gums  
I represent my triviality through the words  
which sound like a rough voice  
And through some bodymoves that get stuck, stuck in the circles.



Definitely more something for  
the year 2017.

A bullet full of language  
Looking into eyes that say more or less :  
I am looking at you right now. Everytime at home.  
If I would loose you it would be only in a nightmare. Or in T.V.  
have you ever cooked while lying?  
Have you ever lied to me before you ate?  
The eyes are blind or liars because there is nothing to see.  
At least not visual reachable

The Great Projector  
Yok tur  
ne re va plus

while reading the lookeyes don't follow texts  
> No Look Reading : Easy and like a football trick  
The brain is lovely empty

*{Now I am telling you something and now I am reading a poem}*

'Imagine editing!', says the trip

Once I went to a museum and an artwork taught me how to be afraid:  
How to be a fruit  
La va qui ri

Electing the normcore by watching shoes, sandals and feet.  
Plus their toppings.  
Actually I am here because I want to be here

and when I was ordering a frappe etcetera the bakery asked me: 'Why?'  
Such a good question but I spend the 50 #Euros and the thing is sure.

Money still sucks.  
In the same way life does  
sad about the own failure  
Fun Fact No.1: I am stealing your ideas in my dreams  
and in real life I pretend they were mine.

Designing desire  
small stuff

## The Fun, The Fact, The Fail:

THE END

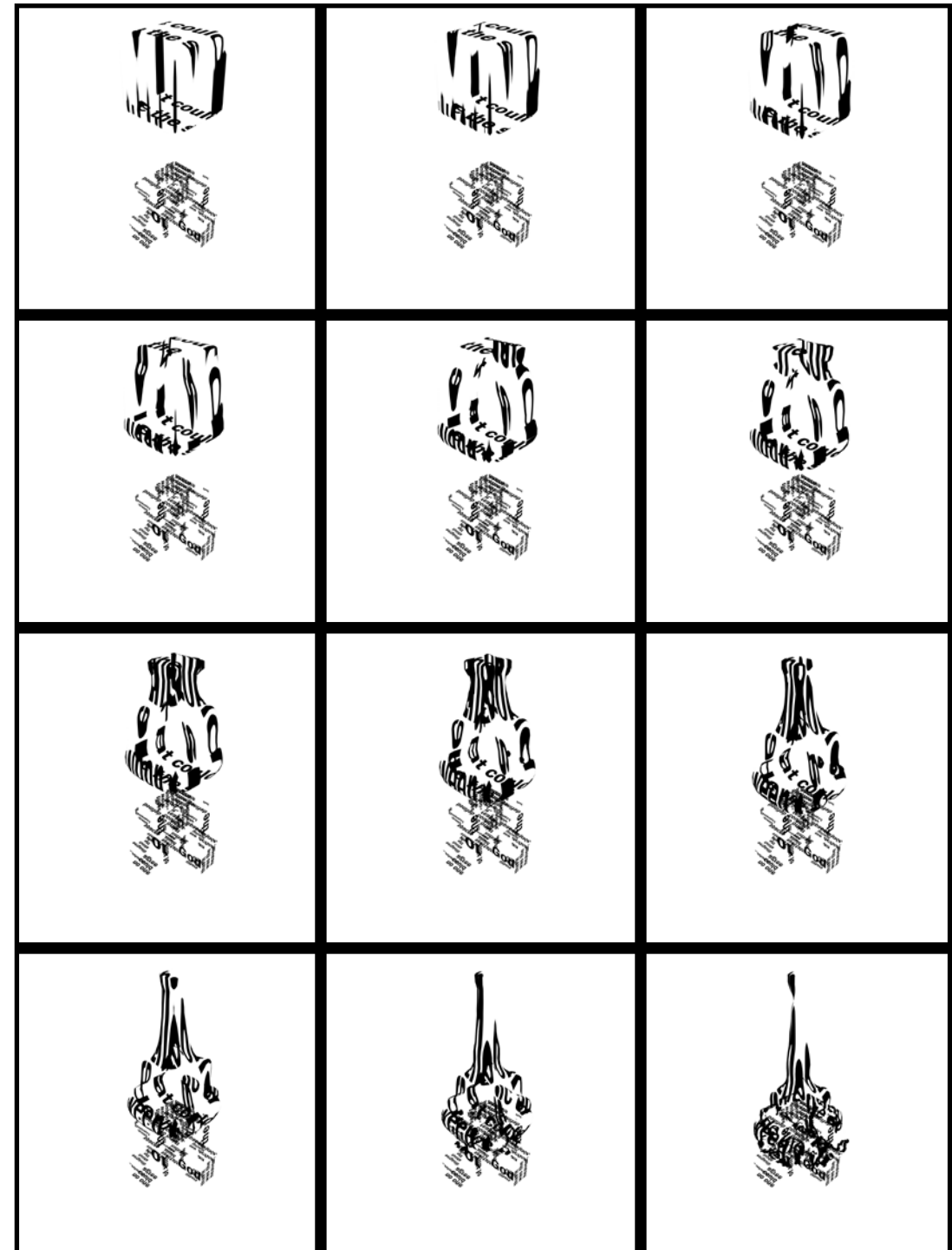
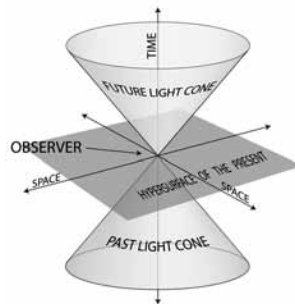


# A PERCEPTION OF **SPACE-TIME** AND DESCRIPTION IN **FICTIONAL LANGUAGE** AN AT RISE DESCRIPTION

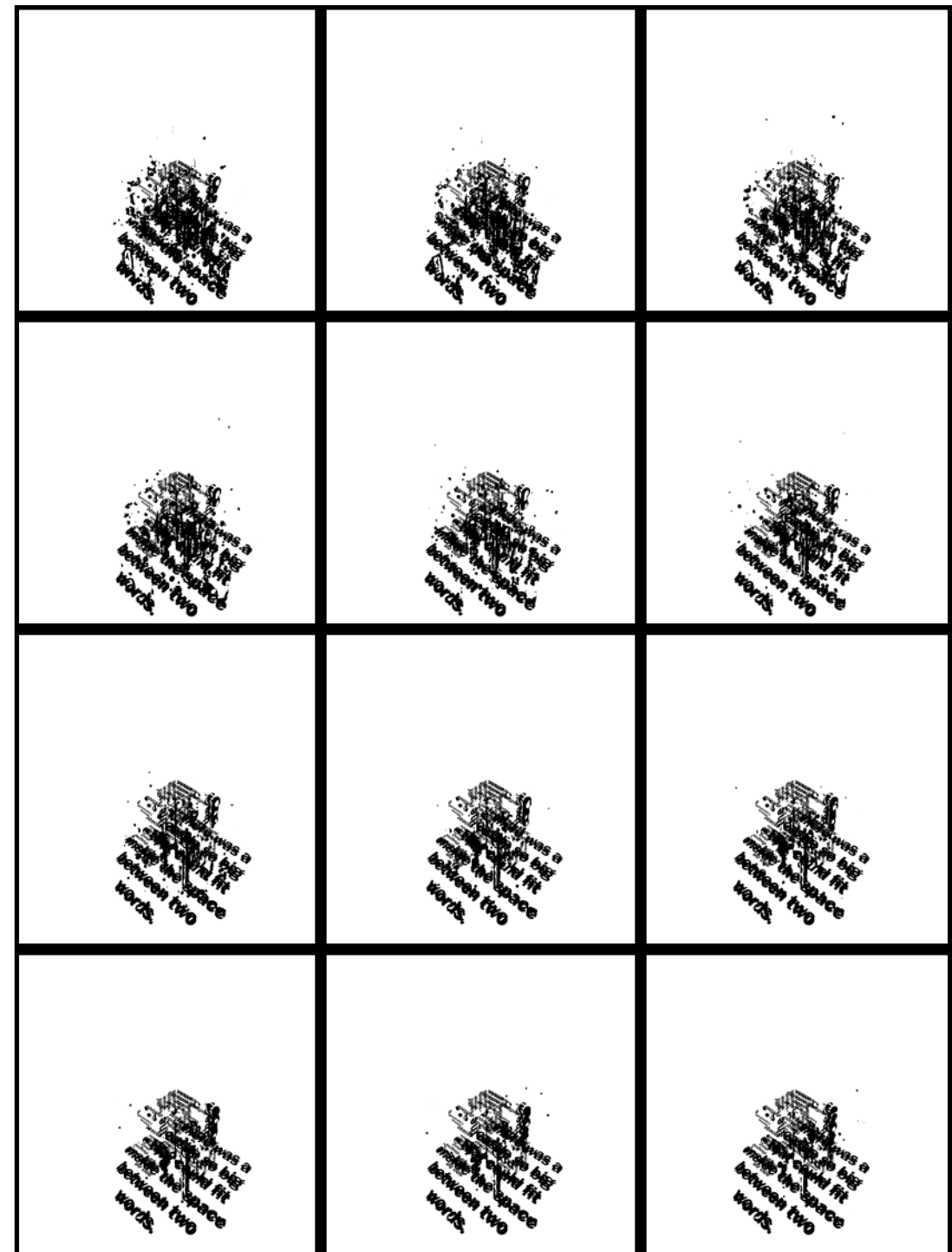
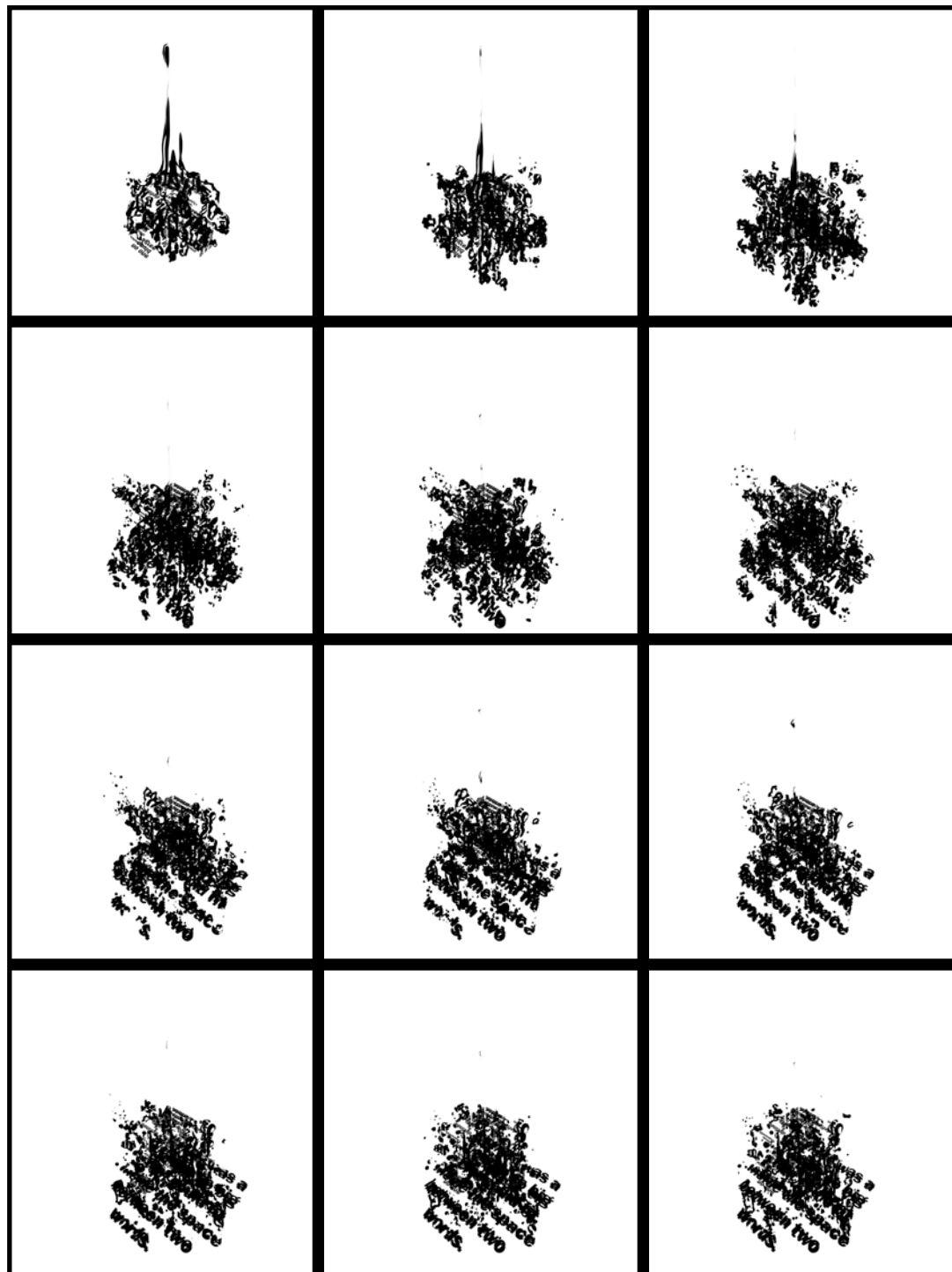
*The girl was eight years old, but her physiology seemed much older.*

*The girl had three meters width and three meters height,  
but her physiology seemed much older.*

*The girl had three meters width and three meters height,  
but her physiology seemed much older. On her*











# DÉJÀ VIE

**NOVA MELANCHOLIA** LIDA DALLA, ELENI KARAGIORGI (AUTUMN 2013),  
ELINA MANDIDI (SPRING 2013), ANTIGONI RIGA,  
DESPOI NA CHATZIPAVLIDOU

**TEXT** MILTOS SACHTOURIS

**DIRECTION** VASSILIS NOULAS

**SETS-COSTUMES** DORA ECONOMOU

I saw Ectoplasm a few days after we first arrived in the city. That was about three years ago. The fact that the theatre was the director's flat gave it an enticing sense of self-organisation and bohemia. Moreover, it was somewhere in the anarchist quarter, in the midst of the crisis, in Athens, Greece. The audience had gathered at a given time, at a certain address, in front of a tenement building. The door opened and we climbed up to the third floor along a narrow, squeaky staircase, huffing and puffing and pushing ourselves into the living room of a cramped flat with a fully equipped kitchenette. A small platform behind the door suddenly came into view (around 5cm high) crammed with chairs to seat an audience. It dawned on us that we were now standing on the stage. On the wall above the chairs there was a gallery of faded faces, writers mostly. I remember noting Baudelaire, Verlaine and Gertrude Stein. The others also looked familiar, however, I settled on Baudelaire only later learning that it was a photo of a Greek writer with a passing resemblance\*\*. We were asked to take our seats on the tiny platform in order for the play to begin...



# 3 YEARS ON

and still in the midst of the crisis, I saw the play again with the same director and cast, although this time it wasn't in the privacy of an apartment but in an art space in Prague, Czechia. The small, cramped flat in Athens had, on this occasion, morphed into a big table on which the play was to be served and which was, for the play, also used as a kitchen table. **WHAT A WEIRD** déjà vu! I felt embarrassed that I'd forgotten so many details. When I saw the play for the first time it made a big impression on me and we all know how rare that can be in the boring art world. In addition to the emotional impact, it influenced my understanding of what was going on in Athens back then, along with my understanding of the project we were planning at the time. **3 YEARS LATER** the novelty of an event usually fades, more often than not you have moved on, time has moved on, politics and aesthetics have changed. You would be forgiven for thinking that if you were to see this piece again you might even feel slightly embarrassed to admit ever having liked it or acknowledging the impact it once had on you—like meeting your high-school crush and being relieved nothing came out of it. **BUT THIS RE-ENCOUNTER** was different. It was as if something both vague and deep was revived, rejuvenated and once again convincing. I was taken in immediately and surprised for a second time at each twist and turn in the story. So good! The cheesiest gore effects, right in your face! Making it clear from the outset that we're confronted with an extreme and redundant realism, by which I mean, not realism in a theatre but a theatre in the real—with some very cheap tricksterism—where two minutes into the scene, the 'real' lies on the floor with a zombie eating her spaghetti guts. Here the hyper-real and staged are not in opposition but working dialectically—making it all REAL! **WE WITNESS THREE YOUNG** wo/men's attempts at self-assertion presented as songs or pantomimes, as monologues or alternating duets. They shift roles, change and assume one another's voices, sometimes by lip-synching, sometimes by speaking for themselves or reciting (each) other's lines. The play uses all the tricks and ruses of the theatre machine and each scene initially seems to adhere to and build on this—before imploding with gore effects. It is almost as if wounds which have been

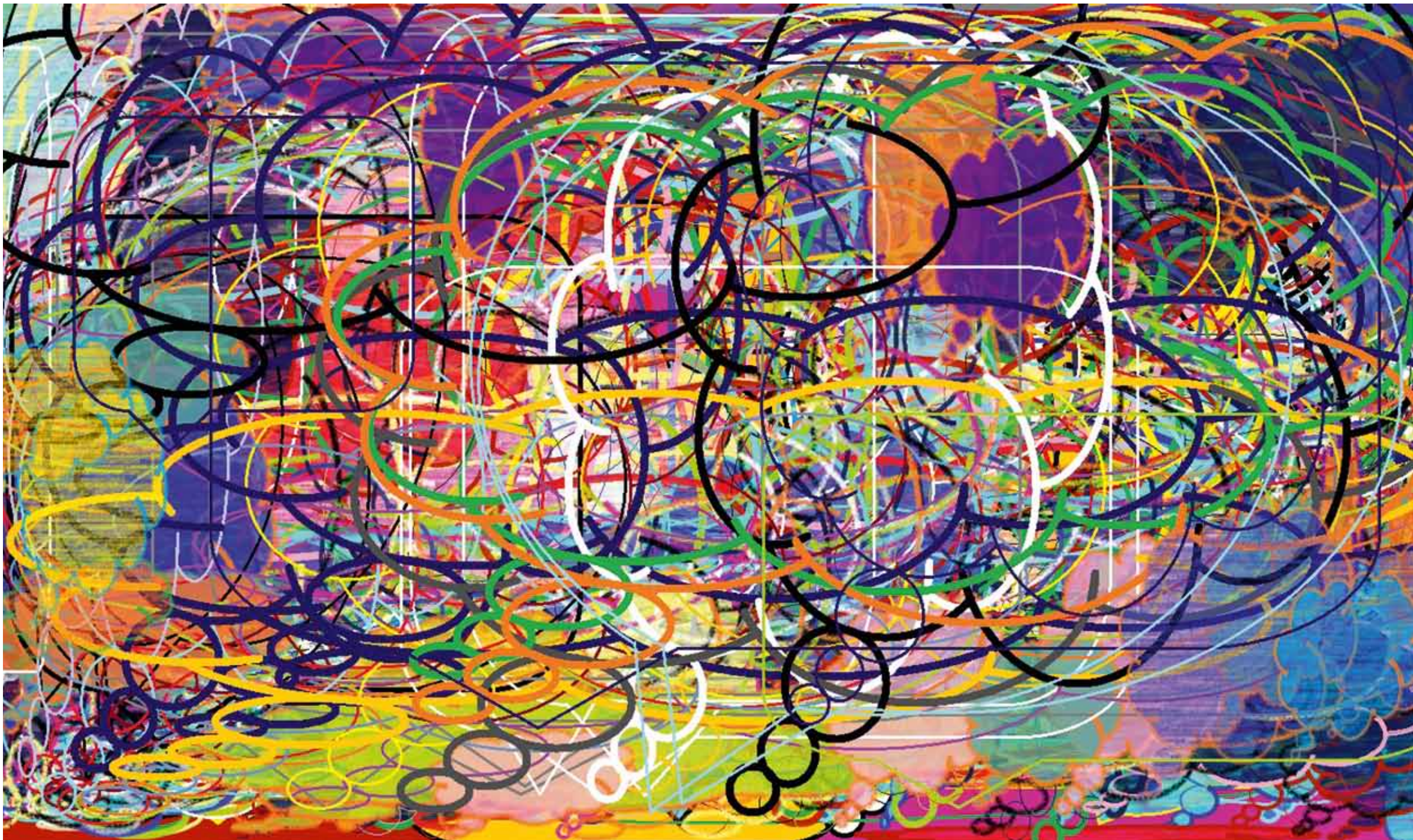
healing suddenly burst open and splatter everywhere. **FROM IMPRESSION TO EXPRESSION**, from impact to experience, from recognition to insight, and importantly, from the depths of my guts... came laughter. Big, broad laughter, that shook my body and mind. Again it was proven: something like art exists! It exists in this very moment, right before my very eyes! I became the witness for something previously unknown to happen, an idea that has 'materialised' in the room, in all its naked simplicity, vulnerable, yet self-conscious. It raised its head and smiled at us, invited us to be comrades in the understanding of what's going on in this new life form, sculpted here, on the stage. **WHILE THESE OBSERVATIONS** ran wild, I realised there was another, older woman sitting on the stage, at the table. I hadn't noticed her before, but obviously she had been there from the start. She paid no attention, looked absentminded and appeared to be almost sedated. She didn't interact with anyone, nor did she speak, and when I saw the play for the first time I thought that she might even be the author's 'real' mother, really living with him in the 'real' flat that served as a theatre. I thought of her as a ready-made, just placed there like an extra empty chair, somehow opposed to the impressive explosiveness of the other actresses. And here I have to confess that although it sounded good, I did not understand a single word of the play as I do not speak Greek. **BUT FINALLY**, at the very end, the 'sedated' older woman had a few lines, an epilogue of sorts, and I felt for the first time that I understood the text—something about going to Piraeus for a boat to take her away. A boat that takes her away? **THERE WAS A LONG SILENCE BEFORE THE APPLAUSE. I REALISED THAT** the other wo/men had left the stage. Their absence during these final moments of the play gave the impression that they were like former selves or parts of the sedated older woman, maybe even her children. Were they materialised inner projections or protuberances, traumata in flesh, former lives that had ended in a struggle for self-assertion?

**\*\* AFTERWARDS I LEARN THE SPOKEN TEXTS WERE POEMS FROM 1986 BY MILTOS SACHTOURIS, THE MAN THAT I MISTOOK FOR BAUDELAIRE.**











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